

Board members present: Chairman; John R. LaCourse, Selectman W. James Griswold and Frank J. DeRocchi.

Others present: Jim Kach, Leslie Martin, Tom Dolan, Dwight Barney, Dave Cedarholm, Henry Brackett, Anne Tappan, Patricia Jenkins, Bonnie Turcotte, Romeo Turcotte, Roger Rice, Caren Rossi, Frank Reinhold, Peg Dolan, Tiffany Golden, Lisa Morin, Todd Allen, Patricia Emison, David Feldman, Brian Penley, Bill Humm, Steve Boisvert, Erick Sawtelle, Irene Boisvert, Charles Cox, Deborah Schanda, Laurel Cox, Ed Bannister, Noel Jost-Coq, Nina Jordan, Lou Ann Griswold, David Meeker, Sharon Meeker, Valerie Smith, Susan Mattioni, Megan Turnbull, Linda Reinhold, Chet Murch, Chris Buslovich, Laure Gund, Anne Lane, Peter Hoyt, Ben Genes, Mark Pierce, Kristin Forselius, Wendy Fogg, Town Administrator; Diane Guimond, Town Secretary; Dawn Hayes.

1. Chairman LaCourse Called the meeting to Order at 6:00 pm.
2. Dave Cedarholm speaks on the details of Senate Bill 2 (SB2). He notes: the purpose is to provide an opportunity for more people to take part in voting on town matters, attending the town meeting shouldn't be a prerequisite to voting, town meeting still happens, it is referred to as the deliberative session. Mr. Cedarholm further explains the process of adopting SB2. He recommends people do their own research through LGC, Google or the Department of Revenue.

Chairman LaCourse opens the floor for questions.

Dave Feldman asks if meetings are going to be aired online, he would like to watch meetings via the internet. Dave Cedarholm responds, tonight's meeting is being taped and will air on Channel 13.

Todd Allen states the way town meeting is now – it is the same 15 or 20 people who speak on the issues and 150-200 attend in the decision making process. However, will SB2 really address that issue. Mr. Allen is in favor of getting more people involved, but is not convinced that SB2 gains us what we think it does.

Tom Dolan speaks about the recent legislative change (40-14), describing how much an article can be changed. Mr. Dolan further states that the town meeting has become an increasingly difficult and drawn out process. Mr. Dolan notes we have outgrown the town meeting process and speaks of the three options available to NH towns: traditional town meeting, SB2 (official ballot) and the representative option. Asks registered voters research all the options.

Dwight Barney has seen changes, recently town meeting has been drawn out with warrant articles. Mr. Barney notes, many Newmarket residents are dissatisfied with SB2 and Barrington is trying to return to traditional town meeting, and that there is less participation with SB2. Mr. Barney encourages people to think long and hard about changing to SB2.

Roger Rice states, a friend of his commented that 'SB2 is not what you think it is'. He further states that based on what he has heard so far – that he and his wife are set against it.

Leslie Martin states she has asked for SB2 ballot voting for at least five years. The issue is that hardly anyone can participate in the way that it is currently set up, even if it is moved to Saturday. There are a lot of people who have the right to vote, but just aren't able to come.

Peg Dolan states, before we go to SB2, we should try Saturday town meeting. If that doesn't work, then maybe we should reconsider.

Tim Janderbra (Northwood resident) states, last year at town meeting in Northwood there were 200 people; 30 wanted to speak. All but 10 only came to vote, they didn't come to listen, they just came to do their civic duty. Mr. Janderbra further states, you will see less people at a deliberative session because they don't have to be there to vote.

Wendy Fogg states, people have told her how much they learn by coming to a town meeting. She agrees the meetings are long. However, it is an enormous privilege and part of Lee's heritage to have town meeting. Ms. Fogg further states, it is the responsibility of parents to bring children and teach them how important it is to come and take your place at town meeting. She lived in Durham and saw town meeting go away, with it, individual voices went away as well.

Mark Pierce asks about Mr. Cedarholm's comment: that SB2 would not preclude town meeting.

Dave Cedarholm states, under SB2 would still be a meeting where there is debate, the ballot vote will happen after the town meeting.

David Feldman states, he hasn't made up his mind yet but, it is the 21st century and it may be time to think outside the box on this matter. Also, he sees the internet as a forum to debate and discuss. Technology can keep people informed.

Leslie Martin states, there are 3,200 registered voters in Lee and it is up to us to communicate the issue to those 3,200 people. When we have town meeting, it gets smaller and smaller as the night goes on. Such as last time, there were only about 35 people that voted on putting \$25,000 into a fund. That amount is just too little, and doesn't represent the town.

Dwight Barney states, everyone has the right and obligation to speak. He requests input from the Board of Selectmen regarding the impact of changing to SB2. Mr. Barney asks what amount of voters participated in the school vote on Tuesday last year.

Linda Reinhold answers, approximately 400 - 500.

Mr. Barney asks how many show up at town meeting over the last five years.

Town Administrator, Diane Guimond reads some of the voting numbers from last year's minutes: warrant article #3 -159 votes.

Linda Reinhold states, to start out it was about 175-180 at the last town meeting.

Charles Cox feels town meeting is very important. He further states, technology has its advantages but does not make community. A lot of what we are doing now in society is destroying community. Town meeting is one of the few times when we can get people together. He thinks numbers would drop at the deliberative session and that as a community we would all lose drastically.

Todd Allen states, it is not accurate to say that the deliberative session is the same as town meeting, it simply is not. There is no room for a compromised position, you can't have someone get up and move to make a change that we can all agree on. Mr. Allen refers to the steady drop off of people participating in the school deliberative session, and it continues to go down.

Noel Jost-Cog agrees all people need to have access to vote. She states, town meeting is intimidating and there are so many things up for discussion that it is rushed through. Ms. Jost-Cog would like to get more information on the representative option.

Town Administrator, Diane Guimond states, there has been much discussion about the possibility of SB2, both good and bad. Ms. Guimond notes that changing to an SB2 town would make her job a lot easier, but she admires the freedom of speech that you have at town meeting. Ms. Guimond adds, she admires the people who get up and speak at town meeting. This form of

government has worked exceptionally well. Ms. Guimond noted, there are 145 volunteers in Lee that want to come to town meeting and talk about warrant articles and the future of Lee.

Patricia Jenkins states, she doesn't think we are ready to make a decision on SB2. The town meeting is what we have done for all these years and we have just begun to talk together about what happens next. She further states, you may go to town meeting with your mind already made up, but at least you hear what the other side has to say. Often we make our decisions in little groups that agree with us, at town meeting you discuss it and you have to sit and listen to what someone else thinks.

Tiffany Golden states, Lee has a strong sense of community but she doesn't get a positive feeling when she goes to town meeting. At the last town meeting she attending there was a lot of debating and wasting time that could have been better spent. If you enjoy that part of the town meeting, you can go to the deliberative session. If you don't enjoy it, you should have the right to not go, it should not take away your right to vote. Ms. Golden further states, it is wrong to punish those who have busy lives. With all of the technology available, you shouldn't have to go to town meeting to be educated these topics. She further states, that town meeting was intimidating, and people were bickering.

Wendy Fogg states, in listening to everyone talk about town meeting and coming together, she wonders how the people of Egypt would feel.

Kristin Forselius states, that she is appalled that traditional town meeting is shutting up the voters who work and have children. Ms. Forselius notes, when women wanted to vote – it was tradition that only men voted, tradition is nice, but not when it is unlawful. Not having a voice in how her town does business is unlawful. Only a small majority go to town meeting to vote, but it doesn't represent the demographic of this town today.

Valerie Smith states, tradition is an important thing, we shouldn't allow our personal lives to keep us so busy. We need to make time to come to these town meetings. She doesn't always make it, but she is going to try. Ms. Smith further states, getting to know the people in your town is very important, and getting to know why a decision is important to someone else.

Selectman Griswold states he is a firm believer in the town meeting form of government and believes Lee would be less well served with an SB2 form of government. Selectman Griswold agrees town meeting sometimes is a lengthy process which can be improved. If the SB2 ballot question fails and there is a town meeting in 2012, it will most likely be on a Saturday day, most of us can arrange our schedules to be available one Saturday a year to

attend town meeting, there are people who are willing to provide child care; he believes this goes a long way to address some of the concerns of those who cannot attend at night. Selectman Griswold notes, democracy is not easy or convenient, it is hard work to thrash out compromise, it is through an informed electorate that we can govern ourselves effectively. If you look at the data from SB2 towns across the state, on average there are 83 people (about 2 ½ % of the electorate or about 1 in 40), even worse it means we as a community are not connecting with each other. Agree or disagree, we do it better face to face. Selectman Griswold states, it is not about bonding with those of like mind, what is harder, and what town meeting compels is bridging and making common cause with people who are not like you to accomplish what we need, good government. Selectman Griswold further states, he believes in traditions that work and town meeting does. As he would not rip down the lovely church in the center of town to put up a larger sleek-steel-glass edifice, so he would not turn his back on town meeting. Governing ourselves isn't any easy process, effort is part of it. This is probably what Robert Frost had in mind when he spoke of the pleasure of taking pains. Town meeting is a good system that has served us well and will continue to do so, if only we let it.

Selectman DeRocchi states, when he ran for Selectman he wanted to make sure more people in Lee were informed and got to vote. Things are moving forward: the IT department started informing people with the E-Crier and channel 13, voting hours (poles opened) will be expanded and a Saturday town meeting will make things better. He agrees the last few town meetings were drawn out do to secret ballots. There is a distribution of unbalanced information occurring in town regarding SB2, as well as other issues, become a bigger and bigger source of peoples decision making of information that is inaccurate, outright lies or not straight forward excluding the details. The people that want to vote, come out. Selectman DeRocchi further states, the one big thing that you're going to lose is how a vote has been on a specific line item effects the next line item. If you attend the school deliberative session, the same intimidation is there, because people are afraid to speak up and say anything because their child may be punished. Selectman DeRocchi states, we all make choices, if you don't want to come to the town meeting, that is your choice, but if you come and participate, you are standing up for this form of government. Come join us on a Saturday, it will be much better.

Chairman LaCourse states, he totally believes what both the other Selectmen have put on the table. This Board is very interested in transparency and we are moving in the right direction. The IT department is trying to get information out on the website as quickly as possible, minutes from committees and commission are posted, information is even posted at the Transfer Station. Chairman LaCourse further states, the Board of Selectmen meet every other Monday, open to the public and people can ask any

questions they like. Chairman LaCourse states, he is bothered by the deliberative session as there is no face on face democracy to change the wording, bring something from the floor or take a whole warrant out – that is real power. You don't want to give that power away lightly. It is important to have the face to face battle, to see what each other has to say. Chairman LaCourse further states, he loves to see democracy in action, he does not want to lose the tradition of town meeting and would vote against SB2.

Erick Sawtelle states, he is totally against SB2 and knows of some SB2 towns that can't stand it. The problem is that people don't read the warrant articles and then vote on them, they don't know what they mean or how they affect them. At town meeting you can get and state your case, there is give and take/back and forth, compromises and changes can be made. You can't do that in an SB2 town. Mr. Sawtelle further states, that a few years ago child care was offered during a town meeting. He recommends doing that again. Further, he challenges people to donate their time for child care and to bring their children to the meeting. Of the people working out of town, handicap, home bound and military, how many of them will go to a deliberative session.

Dave Cedarholm states, those people are not going to go to a deliberative session, but the deliberative session is provided on the internet or on channel 13, they can get the information and vote by absentee ballot.

Erick Sawtelle asks the Town Clerk/Tax Collector how many absentee ballots we had last year.

Linda Reinhold, Town Clerk/Tax Collector states, approximately 14.

Erick Sawtelle states, the information age is getting up to speed but, the one on one give and take should not get lost. Regarding Noel's question about the Representative form of town meeting, that system has been in existence since 1961 in NH. So far, there are no towns in NH taking advantage of that form of government. There are towns in Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine that have used it for a long time. Mr. Sawtelle states, he is not saying that would be a good system for Lee, but it would be better than SB2. Mr. Sawtelle refers to RSA 49-D-3-III for information on Representative Town Meeting.

Nina Jordan states, encourages people to do the research on the representative form of government. She enjoys people exchanging ideas and would not want to see an end to that, with the representative form you get people together and have an exchange.

Jerry Beckman states, as a member of the Granite State Taxpayers; he helped draft the SB2 bill. It took three years and many changes to get the bill passed into law. Mr. Beckman drafted a petition and presented it to the

Oyster River School District, it then passed by a good number of votes. Mr. Beckman states, just because SB2 lets people vote, it doesn't mean they will turn out. Regarding petition warrant articles, it was meant to put it to the voters to make a change, articles were changed to the point that they were meaningless. It happened in Raymond, they had 5 petition articles destroyed. It was then that there was an addition to RSA40-13 section 4 part c, no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article. Bad warrant articles that are petitioned can also get through. Voters that can read, can be informed. Mr. Beckman further states, another thing to think about with SB2 is: bonds pass with a 60% vote. The small town of Lee would not be helped by bringing this in, stick with what you have, if you really care about an issue you will find a way to get there.

Kristin Forselius asks, if the meeting changes to Saturday and includes childcare and 3000 people turn out, where would it be held?

Chairman LaCourse states, it would be held at the Mast Way School. People could be in classrooms with monitors, microphones would be available for people to come to and speak.

Kristin Forselius states, Mast Way would not be big enough and that this is something to think about.

Erick Sawtelle states, you have to be your own advocate, if you really believe in town meeting or voting – you plan ahead, if you really believe in it then you'll do it. He would rather have people that really believe in it vote.

Jerry Beckman states, if you think that going to an SB2 is going to help control your taxes, taxes are high because of budgets, if you vote for budgets – you have to pay for them. You can find a way to keep the budgets down and still the do the job. The Oyster River School District is the biggest costs, and there has only been one time where the reduced the budget at meeting and the next year, it went right back up.

Chairman LaCourse asks the Town Secretary for any letters of phone calls received at town hall on the matter. Town Secretary; Dawn Hayes states, one letter opposed to SB2 from resident Dawn Genes and no phone calls.

Chairman LaCourse states, in respect to transparency and bringing more information, the Capital Improvement Plan is a layout for purchases. Most of the things that are voted on at town meeting are very traditional (same thing every year), there are small budget items for Committees and Commissions, other groups like the ambulance service, but there are only 10-20% that need major discussion. We realize that communication and transparency is important, hopefully that will lessen the issue of people not being able to get

the information to make the right decisions. This is democracy in action here tonight, with people coming together and having open discussion.

Erick Sawtelle, states if people are truly interested in having child care at the next town meeting, a volunteer needs to coordinate that, so that we know how many people are coming.

Leslie Martin states, she doesn't agree that many of the things that we vote on are not bid items and are regular. There have been huge expenditures in conservation easements. She has tried to vote against them, and has not gotten anywhere. She feels that is very unfair and that it only benefits the person that has that land. The conservation easements are a huge amount of money, there is a commitment to not build on that land. We don't have the services available that would want people to build anyway. We don't have public water or sewer.

Kristin Forselius states, she did not grow up in a town that had town meeting, but her town did not lack democracy. Her parents were politically active and knowledgeable; people that live in areas that don't have town meeting are still good citizens who are involved and talking about issues.

Brian Penley states, wants to find out more, he is still on the fence. He wants to know if there is any way to do it faster, so that it isn't a two day affair. He further states, the Saturday meeting would be great.

Irene Boisvert states, one of the things she has noticed over the past few years is that some of the 'hot' warrant articles are placed toward the end. Why not move those items to the beginning and get them taken care of in the beginning.

Chairman LaCourse closes to Public Hearing at 7:55pm. The meeting is called to order at 8:00 pm.

3. Ann Lane of Stage Coach Rd, Durham (running for School Board) shares her motivation with the Board. She is a constant advocate for children, has dedicated 20 years to child advocacy as a community volunteer. She has chaired multiple committees and PTO's. She wants to invest in the community to support all children. She is looking to build district unity for efficiency.
4. Megan Turnbull of Sandy Brook Dr, Durham (running for School Board) introduces herself and thanks the Board for the opportunity to speak. She has a strong vested interest in public schools. She is engaged in district activities and attends the School Board meetings. Has initiated open communication with the superintendant's office and resulted in community

'brown bag lunches' for discussions regarding the schools. She volunteers in the classroom on a weekly basis, co-chairs the Moharimet Fund Run and introduced a most successful reading program at the Durham Library.

5. Jim Cash (running for School Board) introduces himself to the Board and notes, how impressed he was to see the participation at the Public Hearing earlier in the evening. He is currently on the School Board in an appointed position. There are many changes ahead: looking for a new Superintendent, looking for a new a Principal, and there are several other open support positions. He would like to be part of the team that makes those transitions as seamless as possible. He hopes to continue to work with the fine people on the School Board.
6. Peter Hoyt states he is attending this meeting, as Chief Blake could not make it. Selectman DeRocchi asks about: the information needed on the car at the Fire Department and the First Report of Injury for Fire Fighter Ben Blake.
7. Treasurer: Ben Genes presents a Departmental update for the Finance Committee and their recent activities. Mr. Genes reviews the draft presentation of the Financial Process, Cash Flow and Budgeting for the town. Mr. Genes advises the Board, the account manager at People's Bank is working with the town to establish funds in a one year CD that will allow funds to go in and out without penalty. Further, Mr. Genes explains that the checking accounts of town committees and commissions will be managed a bit differently, allowing to gain a little more interest. Additionally, the school district is re-managing how they expect their cash.

Town Administrator: Diane Guimond states, the way the school is requesting their payments is allowing us to hold on to the funds longer and we will be able to accrue a little more interest. Ms. Guimond notes, the revenue right now is at 30% at what we should be receiving, however we haven't paid the trust funds or received all of the grant funds yet.

Ben Genes reports, they will cash flow purchases for the trust funds during the year instead of billing them right away. This will allow the Trustees of the Trust Funds to keep their funds longer and earn better interest.

Selectman Griswold asks how much more interest will be earned by these changes. Mr. Genes will figure it out and report back to the Board.

Mr. Genes states, the town now has a \$6,000,000 letter of credit with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston. People's Bank has set this up, free for a year. Selectman DeRocchi asks, is this is an insurance certificate. Mr. Genes states, exactly.

Town Administrator, Diane Guimond presents a form for the Board's signature, to deposit of with draw from the CD. (internal control document that requires the signature of Treasurer, the Board and the bank)

Ben Genes reviews the power point presentation and lists all member of the Finance Committee: the Treasurer, the Selectman's representative, the Town Administrator, the Chairman of the ABC/Trustee of the Trust Funds, the Chair of the CIP, the have been meeting once per month.

Town Administrator; Diane Guimond states, the committee has created open communication during budget time. It wasn't perfect, but it was better this year and will get even better next year.

Selectman DeRocchi remarks, the end of year (June 30th) numbers were cleaned up, so that the Trust Fund numbers were correct; the committee sat in on the auditor's review.

Ben Genes notes, the intent is for public education about the financial side and the budgeting process. Mr. Genes further remarks, the Town Administrator helped to make clear, during town meeting we intersect with three different budget cycles: we are voting on the budget that starts on the next fiscal year, at the same time we are operating in the current budget that started in the previous July, and immediately following town meeting – planning starts for the fiscal year that starts 15 months later.

Selectman Griswold requests the slides from this presentation are put on the website as a link. Chairman LaCourse suggests sharing the philosophy of the Finance Committee at town meeting.

8. Town Administrator; Diane Guimond reports the fund balance to the Board (fund balance started at \$1,923,879, \$400,000 was used to reduce taxes, plus the overlay of \$21,865, some funds were encumbered) Ms. Guimond states, we are going into this year with very solid numbers.
9. Chairman LaCourse motions to enter into a Non Public Session regarding personnel at 9:00 pm. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. Non Public ends at 9:40 pm, the minutes are sealed.
10. Town Secretary: Dawn Hayes presents a cell phone application (for reimbursement) for Randy Stevens (not present).
11. Town Secretary: Dawn Hayes presents Conservation Commission appointment slips for the Board's signature for the following: David Meeker, Timothy Moody, Anne Tappan, Christine Fischer (alternate), David Shay (alternate).

Approval of Minutes: Selectman DeRocchi motions to accept the minutes of January 24, 2011, February 7, 2011 and February 10, 2011. Selectman Griswold, seconds.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Minutes transcribed by:

Dawn Hayes, Town Secretary

Minutes accepted by:

John R. LaCourse, Chairman

W. James Griswold

Frank J. DeRocchi
Lee Board of Selectmen