

# TOWN WARRANT NARRATIVE 2009

## An Explanation of the Articles as Presented

The narrative provided in concert to the Town Meeting Warrant is intended to be informational in nature, and is indicative of the purpose and rationale of the articles. The State of New Hampshire Budget Reporting Form, identified as the MS-7, which is also printed in your Town Report with the Town Warrant, provides details as to prior year appropriations and expended end of year totals for both the operations and capital acquisitions together with the 2009 requests.

### ***B*** allot Articles ~ Voting

Articles 1 and 2 are ballot-voting articles, which will require action either by voting in person at the election to be conducted at the New Durham Elementary School on **Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009** or by absentee ballot. All absentee ballots should be directed through the office of the Town Clerk. To confirm ~ voting will take place

**Where:** New Durham Elementary School Gymnasium  
**When:** Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
**Polls Open:** 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM (Please note new opening hour)

**Article 1:** Election of Town Officers for the ensuing year.

**Article 2:** Zoning article amendments as proposed by the Planning Board

### ***T*** own Meeting Session

Meeting will reconvene: **Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**7:00 PM**  
**New Durham Elementary School ~ Gymnasium**

### **Article 3: General Operating Budget of the Town: \$3,076,799**

This article represents the operational budget of all town departments, outside agency obligations, and financial obligations such as long-term debt.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:* \$5.46 cents per \$1000 \$100,000 property value = \$546.00

**Article 4: Road Maintenance Request: \$150,000:** Capital request indicative of paving, drainage updates, and road reconstruction planning. Road Agent, Mark Fuller, is proposing to complete work as follows:

1.42 Miles Ridge Road Finish road with final shim/overlay

(Dependent upon costs, South Shore Road will be considered for shimming)

**Note:** The amount requested is defrayed by acceptance of \$100,377.14, which represents New Durham's allocation of State of NH Highway Block Grant Aid to municipalities.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:*      11 cents per \$1,000      \$100,000 property value = \$11.00

**Article 5: Capital Reserves Funding Request \$225,700:** Indicative of requests for previously established Capital Reserve Funds. The Capital Reserve Fund mechanism under RSA 35 is a sound fiscal planning tool that aims to defray tax rate spikes, and is the backbone of many town and city budget cycles. The dollar requests are indicative of Capital Improvement Planning, which has fine tuned replacement schedules, and savings plans for all equipment and proposed projects. This document acts in much the same manner as a Fixed Assets Depreciation Schedule, for the next expected replacement acquisition. Such a plan provides rationale as to amounts of money to be "reserved" on an annual basis for all trucks, vehicles, equipment, land acquisitions, and buildings etc. This year, because of the economic conditions, the reserves requested have been pared down so as to not over-capitalize for the short term.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:*      51cents per \$1,000      \$100,000 property value = \$51. 00

**Article 6: New Reserve Request : Shirley Cemetery Improvements \$2,000:**      New savings reserve request to provide for improvements such as extending the irrigation system and replacing old water lines at the Shirley Cemetery.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:*      Less than .01cents per \$1000      \$100,000 property value = Less than \$1.00.

**Article 7: New Reserve Request Milfoil Treatment: \$10,000:** In concert with the Milfoil Committee's treatment action plan and to effect continuation, the Board of Selectmen are recommending to voters to set up a sum of money into a capital reserve fund. At this juncture, State fund grants have been severely cut back. Therefore in order to have funds available, should grant monies become available or a treatment opportunity becomes available, the reserve fund is the best mechanism for the committee's purpose.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:*      .0 2 cents per \$1000      \$100,000 property value = \$2. 00

**Article 8: New Reserve Request Master Plan Updates : \$2,000** ~ It is now approximately 5 years since the new Master Plan of the Town was adopted. In order to keep the document viable, it is necessary to update and revisit the various chapters. The reserve mechanism provides flexibility to the Planning Board to effect the process of review.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect:*      Less than .01 cent per \$1000      \$100,000 property value = less than \$1.00.

**Article 9: Highway Department Truck Acquisition \$116,000:** Part of the Capital Improvement Plan for planned replacement of aging trucks; namely a 1994 Ford L8000

Plow Truck. The expected acquisition cost will be 100% defrayed by withdrawal of Capital Reserve Funds dedicated to this purpose.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect: -0- cents per \$1,000 \$100,000 Property Value = -0-*

Should this article pass, the Board of Selectmen will solicit bids for the sale of the replaced vehicle.

**Article 10: Expendable Trust Funds \$54,000** Indicative of requests for previously established expendable trust funds. The sum requested for the “Town Buildings Improvement Trust” is a continuation of planned improvements to the Fire Station, and other safety improvements to Town Hall, Police Station and Highway Department.

*Tax Rate Estimated Effect: 12 cents per \$1000 \$100,000 property value = \$12.00*

**Article 11: Amendment Request to the Ambulance Revolving Fund:** This article is a permissive request to allow for use of monies to include, where the balance sheet allows, ambulance employee compensation and equipment purchases for the ambulance only. Currently the language only allows ambulance fees to be used towards future new ambulance acquisition, repairs to the ambulance, and billing vendor costs. Further by specifying the Board of Selectmen as Agents to expend, adds a layer of review to ensure that the fund remains effective and sufficient for its primary purpose ~ the replacement of the current ambulance, when needed. This suggested change would not require the Board of Selectmen to pay for all the allowed purposes if the fund is not sufficient, but does provide the option to pay for certain purposes if it is appropriately funded through the ambulance revenues, thus allowing tax payer relief on the current operating budget of the Fire Department.

**Article 12: Permissive “Housekeeping” Article:** At the back of the warrant section, you will see a listing of what the Department of Revenue refers to as blanket housekeeping articles, which run from year to year indefinitely, unless re-voted. The proposed article is permissive for the Board of Selectmen to accept gifts, legacies, and devises made to the Town in trust for any public purpose. The type of situation that this warrant article would cover, for example, is in the event that the town is named as a recipient of any “Last Will and Testament” reading.

**Article 13: Resolution Pertaining to Birch Ridge Conservation Project:** This “Resolution” is a vital tool to progressing the town’s efforts to seek Conservation Grant Funding towards negotiations to pursue either an outright purchase of the property known as Red Oak Ridge or fee interest in a portion of the property. Without passage of such a resolution of the town’s backing and support, our ability to impress grant funding entities becomes less competitive against other community’s who may have already raised partial funding through bonds or general taxation.

**Article 14: Any Other Business:** This article allows voters to transact any other business that may legally come before Town Meeting. Items brought up for discussion

can only be advisory, or informational in content and nature. Any items requesting the Town to raise and appropriate money cannot come before the meeting under this article.

**Total Estimated Town Tax Rate**

If all the money request articles, as presented, were approved by the voters, the estimated 2009 municipal (town portion) of the tax rate would reflect an estimated rate of \$6.23 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee worked towards a target of level funding to last years' rate of \$6.11, but felt it necessary to factor in the first years' payment effect of the Marchs Pond Bond, which amounts to 14 cents on the tax rate thus producing an upper level of \$6.25 ~ the Board and Budget Committee were able to obtain a lower rate of \$6.23 as mentioned above. The Board of Selectmen would caution that this rate is an estimate only at this point in the year and is subject to maintenance of the revenue stream, and total town valuation.

Since the budget review period starting in October 2008, the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee have cut \$286,572 from budget presentations in an effort to bring a level funded tax rate with the addition of the bond payment. The Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee felt strongly that the economic conditions should dictate conservative budget proposals.

**Town Tax Rate Estimated Effect (Excluding County, and School Rates)**

<b>Property Valued @</b>	<b>2009 Estimated Rate \$6.23</b>	<b>2008 Tax Rate \$6.11</b>	<b>Difference</b>
\$\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$
175,000	1090.25	1069.25	21.00
200,000	1246.00	1222.00	24.00
250,000	1557.50	1527.50	30.00
300,000	1869.00	1833.00	36.00
350,000	2180.50	2138.50	42.00