

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

Docket No. 2015-06

**Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC
and Public Service Company of New Hampshire
d/b/a Eversource Energy for a Certificate of Site and Facility**

**PREFILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF ERIC METH ON BEHALF OF THE
FRANCONIA BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

November 15, 2016

Background and Qualifications

Q. Please state your name.

A. My name is Eric Meth.

Q. Please describe your official capacity in the Town of Franconia?

A. I am a member of the Franconia Board of Selectmen.

Purpose of Testimony

Q. What is the purpose of this prefiled direct testimony?

A. My testimony is being presented on behalf of the Town Franconia's Board of Selectmen. My testimony is for the purpose of presenting the Town's concerns regarding the Northern Pass Project.

Q. Does the Town of Franconia have an official position on this Project?

A. It does. The 2012 Franconia Town Meeting approved Warrant Article 11. In approving that article, the Town stated that it was opposed to the Project for a variety of reasons. Those reasons include the fact that the Project would make the region less attractive for outdoor recreational activities and tourism, negatively impact sightseeing, hiking, skiing and other activities that the region heavily depends upon for revenue, blight the landscape and devastate the values of properties within its line of sight, negatively impact natural resources, deter the growth of small sustainable power production in Northern New England, and potentially affect the health of human, animal and plant life adversely. See Appendix A to my testimony.

Q. Has the Town's position changed since the 2012 Town Meeting?

1 A. No. At its 2016 Annual Meeting, the voters of the Town approved Warrant
2 Articles 17 and 18, approving the appropriation of funds to continue formal opposition to the
3 Project based on the negative impacts it will likely have on the Town and the region. See
4 Appendix B to my testimony.

5 **Q. The proposed Project route was changed in 2015; is the Town concerned**
6 **about the current proposed Route with its proposed underground construction through**
7 **Franconia?**

8 A. Yes. The proposal to bury the transmission line through Franconia causes the
9 Town great concern. The 2016 Town Meeting (which occurred after the Applicants filed their
10 application with the proposal to bury the line through Franconia) voted to continue opposing the
11 Project because of concerns regarding the potential for significant problems regarding municipal,
12 business and private infrastructure that may be interfered with by the Project, as well as
13 construction issues impacting stormwater drainage and municipal water, sewer and other
14 utilities, and heat dissipation. The Town is also concerned about damage that may be caused to
15 its property, difficulty with future maintenance, repair and installation of underground
16 infrastructure. See Appendix B to my testimony.

17 **Q. Does this end your testimony?**

18 A. Yes.

FRANCONIA TOWN MEETING – MARCH 13, 2012

Moderator William Mead called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Moderator announced that the polls would temporarily close, to be reopened shortly before 8:00 p.m. to allow all those who had not voted to do so.

The Moderator recognized and thanked Rich McLeod for his 6-year's of service as Selectmen to the Town. The Moderator also instructed the people that voting would be done with green cards and that they would need to raise them when asked in order to vote on each article.

There was a motion and a second to waive the reading of last year's minutes. The motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 1. To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year. (By ballot)
Ballots Cast: 242

Selectman (3-year term):	Ted Hoyle	121
	Jack Kennedy	120
Write-ins:	Ed Bart	1
	Jeff Jesseman	1
	Roger Odell	1
Treasurer (1-year term):	Tina Peabody	212
Write-ins:	Grace Montagno	1
Moderator (2-year term):	William L. Mead Sr.	208
Write-ins:	Brad Ball	1
	Bob Gilbert	1
	Bill Heath	1
	Steve Heath	1
	Ray Holland	1
	Charles H Hurbert	1
	Jim Walker	2
Supervisor of Checklist (6-yr term):	Marcia Graham	213
Write-ins:	Bernadette Costa	1
Trustee of the Trust Funds (3-year term):		
Write-ins:	Grace Montagno	29
	Karl Beltz	1
	Ned Densmore	2
	Mr. Johnson	1
	Charles Lovett	1
	Bill McFarland	1
	Bill Mead	1
	John Peabody	1
	M. Richmond	1
	Andy Smith	1

	Harriet Taylor	1
Library Trustee (3-year term):	George Lewis	176
Two Vacancies	Charles Lovett	199
Write-ins:		
Water Commissioner (3-year term):	Marcia Graham	210
Write-ins:	Chris Coleman	1
	Angelo Costa	4
	Peter Gignac	1
	Steve Heath	1
	Ray Holland	1
	Charles H. Hurbert	2
	Scott Knowlton	1
	Mac	1
	Richard McLachlin	1
	John Peabody	1

ARTICLE 2. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate one million three hundred ninety-five thousand six hundred and seventy-two dollars (\$1,395,672.00) to defray town charges for the ensuing year.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Executive	\$105,198.00
Election, Registration, & Vital Statistics	30,826.00
Financial Administration	56,950.00
Revaluation of Property	9,500.00
Legal Expenses	5,000.00
Planning & Zoning	5,650.00
General Government Buildings	91,437.00
Cemeteries	16,980.00
Insurance.....	7,700.00
Advertising & Regional Associations.....	12,685.00
(Chamber of Commerce.....	10,000.00)
(North Country Council	1,989.00)
(Regional Airport.....	696.00)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police	308,328.00
Fire.....	86,690.00
Life Squad	54,499.00
Forest Fire.....	3,578.00
Dispatch Phone Lines	30,000.00
(Franconia's Share.....	29,500.00)

HIGHWAYS & STREETS

UTILITIES21,500.00

HEALTH & HOSPITALS.....11,157.00

 (American Red Cross.....470.00)

 (Ammonoosuc Community Health2,500.00)

	(CASA	500.00)
	(Grafton Co. Senior Citizens	1,000.00)
	(Health Officer.....	300.00)
	(Littleton Regional Hospital	1,575.00)
	(North Country Home Health	2,750.00)
	(North Country YMCA.....	250.00)
	(Support Center – Burch House.....	520.00)
	(White Mt. Mental Health.....	1,292.00)
WELFARE		8,600.00
	(General Assistance	6,000.00)
	(CAP	2,600.00)
CULTURE & RECREATION		
Recreation Programs.....		109,056.00
	(Franconia’s Share	49,451.00)
Parks		17,910.00
Patriotic Purposes		1,000.00
Museums.....		311.00
CONSERVATION		1,000.00
DEBT SERVICE		40,600.00
TOTAL.....	(Franconia’s Share \$1,335,567.00).....	\$1,395,672.00

The article was read, moved by Rich McLeod and seconded by Sally Small. Rich McLeod spoke to the article. There was a comment from the floor asking for more of a presentation at the budget hearing next year stating that the overall presentation was too vague. The Select Board acknowledged the comment. A hand vote was taken and Article 2 passed.

ARTICLE 3. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred sixty-eight thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars (\$168,850.00) to be added to the following Capital Reserve Funds previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

Town Buildings Truck, \$6,000; Town Buildings and Grounds Equipment, \$5,500; Highway Trucks, \$52,050; Highway Heavy Equipment, \$8,500; Police Cruisers, \$15,000; Life Squad Van, \$11,500; Fire Equipment Truck, \$7,800; Fire Pumper Truck, \$15,000; Fire Truck Tanker, \$22,500; Fire Safety Equipment, \$10,000; Transfer Station Equipment, \$6,500; and Reassessment, \$8,500.

The article was read, moved by Rich McLeod and seconded by Sally Small. Rich McLeod spoke to the article. There was discussion from the floor asking about the higher amounts appropriated for this year versus last year. Phil Hetzner the current Chair of the CIP spoke to the question explaining that in order for things to balance out the appropriations needed to be bumped up this year for two police vehicles. A hand vote was taken and Article 3 passed.

ARTICLE 4. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty-six thousand dollars (\$66,000.00) to be added to the following Expendable Trust Funds previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

Highway Improvement, \$60,000; Library Building Maintenance, \$5,000; and Sidewalk Improvement, \$1,000.

The article was read, moved by Rich McLeod and seconded by Sally Small. Rich McLeod spoke to the article. There was discussion from the floor pertaining to Town Buildings Maintenance Fund and why the Library Building Maintenance did not fall under that category. Sally Small recognized that it was an error and would fix the wording for next year to highlight Town Buildings Maintenance Fund which would include the Library Building. A hand vote was taken and Article 4 passed.

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000.00) to purchase a Cardiac Monitor for the Franconia Ambulance. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

The article was read, moved by John Lachapelle and seconded by Sally Small. John Lachapelle spoke to the article. John Lachapelle explained that this was a State mandated request and they want all ambulance companies to be in compliance by December 31, 2012 and given the short notice on this there was not enough time to get this on the CIP schedule. Paul Schmucker, the Life Squad Chief spoke on how he had done considerable research on the different options for a cardiac monitor that were available including buying new, buying a refurbished one or leasing. It was recommended by Paul Schmucker and the Select board that the best option would be to purchase a new monitor which would give the Town the best warranty and keep them in compliance. There was considerable discussion from the floor regarding this purchase. One person brought up looking into whether the towns of Sugar Hill & Easton could help out with a portion of this since they also use the service. At this time that could not be determined. There was also a question from the floor about asking the Town's Attorney what would happen if the Town opposed doing this and what sort of implications the State would put on us? A hand vote was taken and Article 5 passed.

ARTICLE 6. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) from the Recreation Committee's line item budget to the Rink Surface Maintenance Fund previously established. The Selectmen recommend appropriation.

The article was read, moved by John LaChapelle and seconded by Sally Small. John Lachapelle spoke to the article. A hand vote was taken and Article 6 passed.

ARTICLE 7. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of two hundred sixty-five thousand eight hundred six dollars (\$265,806.00) for the purpose of solid waste disposal and to raise seventy-five thousand eight hundred-nineteen dollars (\$75,819.00) from taxation. Additional funding for this appropriation will come from the Town of Sugar Hill (\$48,116.00), the Town of Easton (\$21,871.00), PAYT Fees (\$75,000.00),

Special Handling Fees (\$25,000.00), and Recycled Material (\$20,000.00). The Selectmen recommend appropriation

The article was read, moved by John Lachapelle and seconded by Sally Small. John Lachapelle spoke to the article. There was discussion from the floor about the surplus fund amount and why the Town uses such a high number each year. Sally Small spoke to the question explaining that the Town likes to take a conservative approach and that any surplus revenue goes into the Special Revenue Fund for the use of Capital Improvements. Tina Peabody made a motion to amend the Article 7 to reduce the amount for solid waste disposal by \$13,110.00. This amended the amount from \$265,806.00 to \$252,696.00. The amendment was seconded by Jon Peabody and a hand vote was taken on the Amendment. The Amendment failed. The original Article was called, seconded and a hand vote was taken and Article 7 passed.

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seventy nine thousand one hundred twenty-four dollars (\$79,124.00) for the purpose of operating the Abbie Greenleaf Library and to transfer this amount to the Library Trustees for their use as they see fit. The Selectmen recommend appropriation.

The article was read, moved by Roland Barnaby and seconded by Sally Small. Roland Barnaby spoke to the article. George Lewis, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Library asked to amend Article 8 by adding \$1,525.00 to the \$79,124.00 amount to ensure that the library employees receive a 3.6% salary increase along with all of the other town employees. The amendment was seconded by Martha McLeod and a hand vote was taken and Article 8 was amended. The amended article read: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eighty thousand and six hundred and forty-nine Dollars (\$80,649.00) for the purpose of operating the Abbie Greenleaf Library and to transfer this amount to the Library Trustees for their use as they see fit. The amended article was read, moved and seconded. A hand vote was taken and Article 8 passed.

ARTICLE 9. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) to purchase new woodchips for the Dow Field Playground and to authorize the withdrawal of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) from the Dow Field Capital Reserve created for this purpose. The selectmen recommend this appropriation.

The article was read, moved by Roland Barnaby and seconded by Sally Small. Roland Barnaby spoke to the article. A hand vote was taken and Article 9 passed.

ARTICLE 10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) to support the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country in order to provide a healthy, safe and productive after school environment for children from Franconia and other area towns. The selectmen do not recommend this article. (By Petition)

The article was read, moved by Roland Barnaby and seconded by Sally Small. Roland Barnaby spoke to the article. A hand vote was taken and Article 10 failed.

ARTICLE 11. To see if the Town of Franconia will vote to support the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Northern Pass Power Transmission Project as presently proposed will pass through the White Mountain National Forest and could potentially pass through the Town of Franconia on an alternate route, and

WHEREAS this project would make the areas less attractive for outdoor recreational activities and tourism and negatively impact sightseeing, hiking, skiing and other activities that this region heavily depends on for revenue, and

WHEREAS this project would blight the landscape and devastate the values of properties within its transmission corridor and lines of sight, and

WHEREAS this project would adversely impact wildlife and wildlife habitat and wetlands located within the region, and

WHEREAS the provisions of inexpensive and artificial subsidized power to southern New England would be detrimental to the growth of small sustainable power production businesses in northern New England now and in the future, and

WHEREAS the adverse health effects of such high voltage transmission power lines on human, animal and plant life within the electromagnetic field created by the lines are not fully understood, now be it

RESOLVED that the Town of Franconia strongly opposes this project, and that a copy of this resolution be sent to our President, the State Governor, our State and National Senators and Representatives and to the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission. The selectmen recommend this article. (By Petition)

The article was read, moved by Joel Peabody and seconded by Sally Small. Dawn Steele spoke to the article. This was a petitioned article that said the people from the Town of Franconia are opposed to the Northern Pass as it stands now and by voting in favor of this Article it will send the important message to the Governor letting him know how we feel. A hand vote was taken and Article 11 passed.

ARTICLE 12. To see if the Town of Franconia will vote to waive the 2012 property taxes for the not-for-profit Franconia Children's Center. The selectmen do not recommend this article. (By Petition)

The article was read, moved by Roland Barnaby and seconded by Sally Small. Josh Lawton spoke to the article. Josh Lawton explained that the Franconia Children's Center (FCC) is a not for profit organization and they are looking for relief from having to pay property taxes on the building. Currently there are about 20 families from Franconia that use the FCC. There was considerable discussion regarding this and many people spoke in favor of helping the FCC and expressed the message for keeping the facility alive in whatever capacity it could highlighting the importance of attracting young families to the area. Martha McLeod made a motion to amend Article 12 to read: To see if the Town of Franconia will recommend to the Franconia Select Board to abate the 2012 property taxes

for the not for profit Franconia Children's Center. Kathy Taylor seconded and a hand vote was taken on the Amendment. The Amendment passed. The amended Article 12 was read, motioned and seconded. A Hand vote was taken and Article 12 passed.

ARTICLE 13. To hear the reports of agents, auditors, and committees, or other officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relative thereto.

The article was read, moved by Sally Small and seconded by the floor. There were no reports to be heard. A hand vote was taken and Article 13 passed.

ARTICLE 14. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

The article was read, moved by Roland Barnaby and seconded by Sally Small. Bernie Costa spoke regarding the Planning Board and encouraged them to step up their efforts. She also articulated the need for people to consider volunteering to sit on the various Committees that are in need of help and make a commitment to the Town. Jon Peabody expressed his disappointment for not having the Town Report dedicated to a couple of Town employees who recently left the Town and had considerable years of service. Jon would also like to see salaries listed in future town reports. Gene Young asked for direction on a property owner which appears to be obsolete on Kinsman Road. There being no further business a hand vote was taken and Article 14 was passed.

There being no further business to transact, there was a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Marilyn L. Knowlton
Town Clerk

TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Lafayette Regional School
March 8, 2016 – 7:00 PM
Polls open from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Moderator William Mead called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Moderator declared the polls closed at 7:00 p.m.

The Moderator introduced the Selectmen Bob Montagno, Bernardette Costa, and Eric Meth and Administrative Assistant, Sally Small. He then recognized all veterans present at the meeting for their service to our country and held a moment of silence for those residents who passed away this year. The Pledge of allegiance followed.

There was a motion and a second to waive the reading of last year's minutes. There being no discussion, the motion passed by voice vote.

The Moderator noted that he received petitions for Article 3 and Article 16 to go to a ballot vote.

ARTICLE 1. To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year. (By ballot)

Selectman (3-year term)	Eric Meth	190
Write-ins:	Joseph Cimino	1
	Frederic Hoyle	1
	John Lachapelle	12
	Robert Montagno	1
	Sharon Penney	1
Selectman (1-year term)	Robert Montagno	102
Write-ins:	John Lachapelle	110
	Scott Knowlton	1
Treasurer (1-year term)	Tina Peabody	212
Moderator (2-year term)	William Mead	196
Write-ins:	Elizabeth Andrews	1
	Ned Densmore	3
	John Lachapelle	1
	James Walker	2
Library Trustee (3-year term)		
Two Vacancies	William Mellekas	200
	Elizabeth Andrews	98
Write-Ins:	Meghan McPhaul	1
	Sharon Penney	87
	Christopher Scott	1
Trustee of the Trust Fund (3-year term)	Sharon Penney	3
Write-Ins:	Peter Ainsworth	1

	Elizabeth Andrews	1
	Brad Ball	1
	Anne Foss	1
	Karen Foss	1
	Mary Grote	1
	Steve Heath	1
	Mark Hesler	1
	Joe Germano	1
	Jack Kennedy	1
	Richard Langworthy	1
	George Lewis	1
	Kathy Mead	1
	William Mellekas	2
	Eric Meth	1
	Robert Montagno	1
	Jon Peabody	1
	Tina Peabody	1
	Elizabeth Penney	1
Cemetery Trustee (3-year term)	Barbara Holt	193
Write-Ins:	Mary Brubaker	1
	Will Nolan	1
Water Commissioner (3-year term)	Richard McLachlin	200
Write-Ins:	Robert Montagno	1
	Jon Peabody	1

ARTICLE 2. Are you in favor of adopting the amended Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board? This article was approved last year but because of a procedural error the amended 2015 Zoning Ordinance was not adopted. This year's amended Zoning Ordinance includes revisions that have been made due to additional public input. (By Ballot) (Majority vote required)

Ballots Cast: **YES/NO VOTE:** **YES – 191** **NO – 33**

Article 2 passed by ballot vote

Prior to Article 3 being read, the Moderator explained to the audience that there had been discussion on social media and throughout the town regarding RSA 40:13, which allows, in the event the budget is voted down, to revert to the default budget; however, after speaking with counsel and the Secretary of State's office, RSA 40:13 covers SB2 towns and towns that have a Budget Committee. Franconia has neither. RSA 32:6 governs our situation and that says the amount of the budget may only be amended up or down.

ARTICLE 3. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate one million six hundred ninety seven thousand four hundred four dollars (\$1,697,404.00) to defray town charges for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required)

GENERAL GOVERNMENT	
Executive	\$120,511.00
Election, Registration, & Vital Statistics	40,138.00
Financial Administration	63,392.00

Revaluation of Property		9,450.00
Legal Expenses		10,000.00
Planning & Zoning		4,110.00
General Government Buildings		88,912.00
Cemeteries		13,354.00
Insurance		9,475.00
Advertising & Regional Associations		11,894.00
(Chamber of Commerce	10,000.00)	
(North Country Council	1,894.00)	
PUBLIC SAFETY		
Police		372,579.00
Fire		104,943.00
Life Squad		66,199.00
Building Inspection		3,000.00
Emergency Management		2,900.00
Dispatch Phone Lines		44,118.00
(Franconia's Share	43,618.00)	
HIGHWAYS & STREETS		390,232.00
UTILITIES		21,500.00
Health Officer		200.00
WELFARE		8,700.00
(General Assistance	6,000.00)	
(CAP	2,700.00)	
CULTURE & RECREATION		
Recreation Programs		121,984.00
(Franconia's Share	47,000.00)	
Parks		36,615.00
Patriotic Purposes		1,000.00
Museums		386.00
CONSERVATION		1,000.00
DEBT SERVICE		150,812.00

TOTAL..... (Franconia's Share \$1,621,920.00).....\$1,697,404.00

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. Bernadette Costa spoke to the article outlining the budget process. Bernardette stated the increase in the budget it due in part to increases in salaries, health insurance premiums, town's contribution to employee retirement, salary for webmaster, and the cost of training someone to replace the Administrative Assistant who will be retiring at the end of this year.

Several citizens were concerned about what they feel is a 6% increase in the budget. They feel during these difficult financial times that a lean budget is required. The 2015 budget was reduced by \$54,000.00 and was still under spent by \$29,000.00.

Dawn Steele made a motion to reduce the 2016 budget to last year's budget of \$1,630,488.00, which represents a decrease of \$66,916.00. Second by Russell Cumbee.

A Chamber of Commerce representative requested that their budget be increased to \$10,000.00 from \$5,000.00 because it is their advertising budget which helps bring in tourism. The Moderator explained that we cannot vote on a particular line item in the budget.

There was concern raised regarding the increase in the Life Squad budget. It was explained that in the past the figures were kept low and they were informed by the accountants that is not the proper way to do it. The budget more accurately reflects what they anticipate on spending.

There was discussion regarding the need to budget for what you think you will spend in the coming year, not what was spent in the past year so that there is sufficient funds to cover all costs. Any monies not spent in the budget do not disappear or go away. You need to fund some level of inflation in the budget. It was also pointed out that the increase in the budget is actually 3.6% and not 6%.

The amendment to the article was called to a vote (ballot vote). Results: 68 – Yes; 75 – No. The amendment fails.

The moderator read Article 3 once again and it passed by majority voice vote.

ARTICLE 4. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred one thousand three hundred seventy six dollars (\$101,376.00) to be added to the following Capital Reserve Funds previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Town Buildings Truck, \$7,980; Town Buildings and Grounds Equipment, \$6,834; Highway Trucks, \$4,826; Highway Heavy Equipment, \$7,000; Police Cruisers, \$7,100; Life Squad Van, \$11,118; Life Squad Equipment, \$3,264; Fire Equipment Truck, \$7060; Fire Pumper Truck, \$20,194; Bridge Maintenance, \$5,000; Rural Water Supply \$5,000; and Legal \$16,000.

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. A question was raised concerning why \$16,000.00 for legal was being raised. It was explained that there were legal expenses this year attempting to collect back taxes and funds need to be raised again. Article 4 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thirty nine thousand nine hundred dollars (\$139,900.00) to be added to the following Expendable Trust Funds previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Highway Improvement, \$100,000; Town Buildings Maintenance, \$15,000; Frost Place Maintenance, \$3,900 and Sidewalk Improvement, \$21,000.

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 5 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of Fire Ladder Truck Capital Reserve Fund and to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty seven thousand Dollars (\$37,000.00) for this purpose. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small.

There was a question concerning what the total increase in spending will be between the budget that was just voted in and the warrant articles. It was stated the total spending is \$2,754,807.00, which is a 5.4% gross budget increase over last year. This amount will be reduced by anticipated income of \$254,000.00 from Capital Reserve Funds, so the actual increase is 1%.

Rick Gaudette, Franconia Fire Chief, spoke to the article. The proposal is to purchase a used piece of equipment for a total expenditure of \$140,000.00. The current tanker truck has a life expectancy of 20 years and we think we can extend the life of that truck and use some of the money we put aside for that and use it for the ladder truck. The ladder truck is an important piece of equipment for the safety of the public and the Fire Department.

A question was raised concerning Mutual Aid and the fact that surrounding towns have ladder trucks that are available. The Fire Chief explained that once you arrive at the scene of a fire, set up your equipment and then realize you need a ladder truck, it then takes between twenty and thirty minutes for the truck to arrive.

Article 6 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of one hundred ten thousand dollars (\$110,000.00) to purchase a 10-Wheeler Truck & Sander for the Highway Department and to authorize the withdrawal of eighty-eight thousand nine hundred dollars (\$88,900.00) from the Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for this purpose, seven thousand \$7,000 from trading in the 2000 Mack, and to raise fourteen thousand one hundred dollars (\$14,100.00) through taxation. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 7 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 8. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of one hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$190,000.00) to purchase a loader, an excavator and a trailer for the Highway Department and to authorize the withdrawal of one hundred three thousand hundred dollars (\$103,000.00) from the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for this purpose, thirty thousand (\$30,000.00) from trading in the 2006 backhoe and to raise fifty-seven thousand dollars (\$57,000.00) through taxation. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Sally Small and seconded by Robert Montagno. There was no discussion. Article 8 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of thirty-five thousand three hundred dollars (\$35,300.00) to purchase a Police cruiser and to authorize the withdrawal of twenty-eight thousand six hundred dollars (\$28,600.00) from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for this purpose, and to raise six thousand seven hundred dollars (\$6,700.00) through taxation. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. John Monaghan, Franconia Police Chief, explained that cylinder 7 broke on the police cruiser and no one will work on it because of the liability and no one will sell us a used engine because of the liability, and a new engine was worth more than the cruiser so they had to purchase the new cruiser prior to Town Meeting. The vehicle could not be traded in; however it will be put up for auction so that some revenue will be received.

A question was raised regarding what would happen if this article was voted down. It was explained that the funds would need to come out of their line item budget.

Article 9 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of forty two thousand eight hundred dollars (\$42,800.00) for a full Property Valuation Update, as required every five years by the Department of Revenue Administration, and to authorize the withdrawal thirty-four thousand three hundred dollars (\$34,300.00) from the Reassessment Capital Reserve Fund created for the purpose, and to raise the sum of eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500.00) from taxation. The Selectmen recommend appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 10 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 11. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) from the Recreation Committee's line item budget to the Rink Surface Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 11 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 12. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500.00) from the Recreation Committee's line item budget to the Dow Field Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 12 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 13. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) from the Recreation Committee's line item budget to the Recreation Van Capital Reserve Fund previously established for this purpose. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 13 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eighty two thousand eight hundred twelve dollars (\$82,812.00) for the purpose of operating the Abbie Greenleaf Library and to transfer this amount to the Library Trustees for their use as they see fit. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Bernardette Costa and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 14 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15. To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of two hundred eighty one thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$281,250.00) for the purpose of solid waste disposal, with (\$51,893.00) from the Town of Sugar Hill, (\$23,587.00) from the Town of Easton, (\$77,000.00) PAYT Fees, (\$29,000.00) Special Handling Fees, (\$18,000) in Recycled Material, and to raise (\$81,770.00) from taxation. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 15 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16. To see if the town will vote pay for the town's portion of health insurance (69%) for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, at her request, and to vote to raise and appropriate the sum of six thousand one hundred eighty five dollars (\$6,185.00) to pay for her health insurance for the remaining 9 months of 2016. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small. Several residents raised concerns that if this article were approved it would open up a "Pandora's Box" and set a precedent for all elected officials to ask for health insurance coverage. It was stated the Town Clerk/Tax Collector accepted the position with the current compensation package which does not include health insurance and there is no reason to add that at this point. Another concern raised was since the Town Clerk/Tax Collector is an elected official and can set her own hours, what is to stop her from only working 25 hours once this is approved.

There was discussion regarding whether the insurance coverage was for the remainder of this year or would it then be included in the budget. It was determined that the way the article is written the insurance would be for the remainder of 2016 only. Any continuation of insurance coverage would need to be approved at next year's town meeting.

The article was called to a vote (ballot vote). Results: 38 – Yes; 69 – No. Article 16 failed.

The Moderator announced the results of the candidate vote (as outlined under Article 1 above).

Jeff Woodward made a motion that we cannot revisit Article 3 tonight and seconded by Kathy McCarthy. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 17. To see if the town will vote to create a Town-funded trust fund pursuant to RSA 31:19-a, to be known as the Northern Pass Defense Fund, for the purpose of financing legal expenses and other costs incurred by the town in advocating the Town's opposition to the Northern Pass project, to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for this purpose and, to appoint the Selectmen as agents to expend. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small. There was a question regarding when the Town took a position to oppose Northern Pass. It was stated there was a petitioned article at the 2011 town meeting opposing Northern Pass, which was voted in.

Peter Grote spoke to the article. The reason for the defense fund is outlined in the platform that was sent in a letter to all towns that are impacted by Northern Pass stating that we voted to intervene and explaining the platform. Basically it concerns construction issues impacting storm drainage and municipal water, sewer and other utilities, maintenance of all these infrastructures under the ground, addressing remediation on the part of any developers to industrial, commercial or residential properties, remediation for existing industrial, commercial or residential properties because of this impact. Municipal infrastructure reversal fund for unforeseen events, damages mitigation fund and a decommission trust fund. The major concern is once this line is installed under the streets the Town is going to be stuck with major maintenance issues and major new construction issues and heat dissipation problems and we want to make sure we are adequately compensated. That is why we have recommended a defense fund that will be pooled, at this point, with ten other towns and we are hoping to get additional towns that will pool the very expensive cost of litigation.

Ginny Jeffryes stated that one of the main points is if they do indeed come all the way down Route 18 and out Route 116 their cable, which is going to be 155 degrees, is going to be 36" below the surface of the road. Our water pipes in the downtown area are 5', or less than 5', below the ground. The cable is going to have a concrete cap over it to prevent dig ins. To do any kind of repair or construction once this is all in place will be much more expensive. To have an attorney who can go as our intervenor and sit at the table and have them set aside money for the Town of Franconia for all these expenses is important.

Bernardette Costa stated that the Selectboard appointed a committee headed up by Peter Grote, Ginny Jeffryes, Mary Grote, and Eric Meth and they have done an awful lot of work to represent the town in what we hope will be a successful way to have the least impact on the town.

Article 17 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 18. To see if the town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to accept donations, grants, or gifts in any amount, to be utilized for the same purposes as set forth in Article 18, above, to be held and invested in accordance with RSA 31:19-a, paragraph IV. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

The article was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small. Eric indicated that the article referred to in Article 18 should read "Article 17". Eric Meth made a motion to amend Article 18 to read "...as set forth in Article 17..." The motion was seconded by Sally Small. The amendment to Article 18 passed unanimously by voice vote.

The amended article was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small. Article 18, as amended, unanimously passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 19. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand two hundred eighty dollars (\$15,280.00), for the following non-profit organizations. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Adaptive Sports Partners of the NC, \$750; American Red Cross, \$518; ACHS, \$4,000; CASA, \$500; Center for New Beginnings, \$1,000; Franconia Children's Center, \$2,000; Grafton County Senior Citizens, \$1,500; North Country Home Health & Hospice, \$3,200; Support Center at Burch House, \$520; White Mt Mental Health, \$1,292.

The article was read, moved by Robert Montagno and seconded by Sally Small.

A question was raised as to why the Town supports these organizations. It was stated that we have supported them in the past. The Town receives requests for these donations and we have received a request from each of the organizations listed.

A resident read from the Franconia Children's Center request letter, which read in part, "The funds are for the general upkeep of our facility along with supplies for our classroom". How does this benefit the Town of Franconia? It was stated that a lot of people in town use the facility. It was also stated that the Children's Center is very fiscally responsible. Some of these monies help to cover expenses when a Franconia family has a hard time making a payment due to an unexpected bill. It allows the child to remain in the program. The monies provide supplies and many other things, but it helps the Center help people. It was also stated

that there is no preschool program in town, but legally we are responsible for these children and those children end up being housed at the Franconia Children's Center.

A representative of Adaptive Sports Partners stated they have offices in town and most of the work they do is at Cannon Mountain Ski area. They have 150 people that work for their organization and they take about 700 disabled people through all kinds of sports-- skiing, hiking and biking-- in the community and they appreciate the support. It was also stated that every thanksgiving we have the Turkey Trot which the Recreation Department partners with Adaptive Sports and the money goes to both organizations.

A resident made the following fiscal arguments:

- White Mountain Mental Health and Burch House. If we were in a crisis, a suicide situation in this town and we needed these resources and they weren't there it would be very expensive.
- The Children's Center-- We are talking about single women who are trying to work who can't always afford to put their children in daycare so they can work full time and be paying taxpayers in this town
- Adaptive Sports Partners - When they come to town a lot of people come up from places like Boston for the weekend and they want to spend time in this community.

It was stated that people do not have a problem giving money to deserving organizations; it is about knowing how the organization spends its money, how many Franconia residents are being served by these organizations, and whether these services are being reimbursed by the recipients or by third parties.

A question was asked why are these organizations all lumped together in one article and not listed separately. It was explained that this was previously in the line item budget but has now been put in a warrant article. An amendment can be made to remove something from this warrant article. It was also stated that if Article 21 gets passed then these requests will be handled differently.

Article 19 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 (one-thousand and no dollars) to support the Boys & Girls Club of the North Country in order to provide a healthy, safe, and productive after school and vacation camp environment for children from Franconia and other area towns. The Selectmen do not recommend this appropriation. (By petition)

The article was read, moved by Bob Tortorice and seconded by Sally Small. Jeff Woodward spoke to the article. There are children from Franconia that use the Club. They are in the process of purchasing two 16-passenger vans that would come to Franconia and pick up kids after school and bring them to the Boys and Girls Club. There are parents who work in the community and their kids attend the program and that allows them to stay and work until four or five o'clock.

There was a question raised as to why the Selectmen did not recommend this appropriation. Bernardette responded that they did not have any information on how many children from Franconia were being serviced.

There was a question regarding why we need to send kids to the Boys and Girls Club to recreate when we have a recreation budget. It was stated that the program is more than recreation. They offer programs that help develop a healthy attitude and lifestyle and help with academic and social skills. They work in collaboration with Littleton Studio School, Appalachian Mountain Club, North Country Climbing Center and White Mountain Science Institute. It was stated that if you invest in children whose parents are on welfare, they are 23% more likely to break that cycle of dependency and become taxpayers for our society.

There was a question regarding how much surrounding towns donate. It was stated Littleton gives \$10,000.00, Sugar Hill - \$500.00, Easton - \$1,000.00, Bethlehem - \$1,000.00, Lyman - \$250.00, Landaff - \$500.00, and Lisbon does not give cash support but waives taxes.

Article 20 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21. To see if the town will vote to adopt the following policy in regard to Charitable Contributions:

Requests for charitable contributions from the town will be accepted only from entities that have documented their nonprofit status.

All such requests must be petitioned annually using established warrant article procedures. These requests must be listed and voted upon on separate articles on the Town Warrant.

Prior to each Town Meeting, entities requesting charitable contributions must submit a report to the Town which details their activities and the specific services provided to actual residents of the Town during the preceding year. These reports should also include information regarding the degree to which the requesting entity was compensated for these services, either by the recipient or by third parties. These reports must be submitted at a time which permits them to either be included in the Annual Report or provided to voters under separate cover with that report. These reports must then be either included in the Annual report or provided to voters with that report under separate cover.

Requesting entities must have a representative present at the Town meeting to answer questions and clarify information contained in their report.

Failure to comply with the above conditions will disqualify any requesting entity from receiving Town funds. (By Petition)

The article was read, moved by Russell Cumbee and seconded by Dawn Steele. Russ Cumbee spoke to the article. He stated he is not opposed to donating to charitable organizations; however there needs to be a policy in place that takes the burden off the taxpayers to prove why the organization should get money rather than having the organization show why it needs the money. He stated he has a one page form for providing all the information requested such as the mission of the organization, how they use the money, and how much they are requesting. If this information was filled out and made available at the budget hearing, voters would be able to make an informed decision.

Concerns were raised regarding certain aspects of this article putting an undue burden on these organizations that surrounding towns are not requiring of them. Since all town meetings are held on the same evening, it would be difficult to be present at each one. Russ indicated that this evening several people spoke in favor of some of these organizations. It does not have to be an employee of the organization.

Several residents stated they did not disagree with the spirit of the article but disagreed with some of the language. A question was asked regarding where the language in the article came from. Russ indicated he made it up himself. It was suggested that we should look and see if this resembles anything from the surrounding towns.

Eric Meth made a motion to table Article 21 due to some of the language being too restrictive, seconded by Timothy Burnell. The motion to table Article 21 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22. To hear the reports of agents, auditors, and committees, or other officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relative thereto.

The articles was read, moved by Bernardette Costa and seconded by Sally Small. There was no discussion. Article 22 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 23. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

The motion was read, moved by Eric Meth and seconded by Sally Small.

There was a concern raised regarding the condition of the water at the new Safety Services building. The water pressure is too low to wash the fire trucks; the water in the ladies' shower comes out black; and they cannot drink the water because it is dirty. Water Commissioner Ray Peltier indicated this situation would be looked into.

There being no further business to transact, there was a motion by Melinda Richmond and a second by Lydia Cumbee to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol F. Wills
Town Clerk