COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OF FALMOUTH

APRIL TOWN MEETING

and

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Memorial Auditorium
Lawrence School
Lakeview Avenue
Falmouth, Massachusetts

MODERATOR: David T. Vieira

TOWN CLERK: Michael Palmer

Tuesday, April 4, 2017

7:00 p.m.

_________________________________________
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### SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

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THE MODERATOR: All Town Meeting Members please come forward; take your seats so we can establish a quorum for the Annual Town Meeting.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, all Town Meeting members please come forward, take your seats.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, our tellers this evening: in the first division will be Mr. Netto; in the second division will be Ms. Cuny; and in the third division will be Ms. Schneider. All Town Meeting Members present please rise for the establishment of the quorum and the tellers will return a count.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: I want to remind all Town Meeting Members present and all speakers this evening to please identify yourself by name and precinct each time you speak. We were a little lax on that last night. I’ll try to remember to tell them. Our stenographer is trying to get good – good record over there and
doesn’t always know who’s speaking.

I remind everyone that we’re live, this evening, again, on FCTV Channel 15, and attendance will be published in the Falmouth Enterprise, so Town Meeting members make sure that you do check in.

In the first division, Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: 40.

THE MODERATOR: 40.

THE MODERATOR: In the second division, Ms. Cuny?

MS. CUNY: 78.

THE MODERATOR: 78.

In the third division, Ms. Schneider?

DR. SCHNEIDER: 58.

THE MODERATOR: 58.

By a counted vote of 176, we have a quorum and I call the Special Town Meeting to order.

All present please rise for the presentation of the colors by Falmouth’s oldest scouting unit. Last night we had Falmouth’s newest scouting unit. This is our coed Sea Scout Ship 40.

[Pause.]
THE MODERATOR: As part of Sea Scout Ship 40 tonight, we have the newly-elected Regional Bosun’s Mate Taylor Martin-Graham. This makes her the second highest ranking youth in the Northeast United States and she’ll be the highest ranking youth in the Northeast United States next year. Congratulations, Taylor.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Also, our New England Flotilla Bosun’s Mate Emily Newell is in Ship 40. And Falmouth’s newest Eagle Scout, Alex Laruffa, is the Cape Cod Squadron Bosun. Ladies and gentlemen, Sea Scout Ship 40.

[Cheers and applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Please follow me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

[Pledge of Allegiance taken.]

THE MODERATOR: Regional Bosun’s Mate Taylor Martin-Graham for the invocation.

MS. MARTIN-GRAHAM: Prepare for prayer in the manner that you’re accustomed to.

Lord, when it comes to meeting and communicating with each other, help us to be good listeners. Help us to be open minded, putting
aside our own agendas. Help us to be honest without being insensitive. Help us to be respectful without being too formal or artificial. Help us to question and to challenge without being harsh. Help us to be aware that this is just one moment, just one meeting. And lastly, help us to remember that you, too, are always meeting and communicating with us. Amen.

THE MODERATOR: At this time I would ask all present to please remain standing for a moment in silence. At this time we’d like to remember a long-time Town Meeting member who has passed since our last meeting and former Fire Chief of the Falmouth Fire Department Paul Brodeur, and a former Town Meeting member and retired captain of the Falmouth Fire Department Eugene Michael, otherwise known as Micky, Moniz.

[Moment of Silence taken.]

THE MODERATOR: Colors post.

Ladies and gentlemen, Falmouth’s oldest scouting unit, Sea Scout Ship 40.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, tonight we’re going to start the Special. There’s three
articles, so we won’t use a blanket vote this evening. We’ll do the dispensing of the reading of the warrant and then we’ll get right into Article one.

But before we do that, I’d like to make a couple of announcements.

Harold Crocker, could you stand up, please, Mr. Crocker. It was just brought to my attention that Mr. Crocker has decided not to take out nomination papers to run for re-election, but he did take out nomination papers three years before I was born.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: And he’s been a Town Meeting member ever since. Mr. Crocker, thank you for your 45 years of service to the Falmouth community.

[Standing ovation.]

THE MODERATOR: Harold, I know Butch is at home watching and he’s proud of you, as well.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Bothner, Bertha Bothner, would you please rise. It was brought to my attention that Ms. Bothner has decided not
to seek re-election as a Town Meeting member, but
just as I was entering kindergarten at Teaticket
Elementary School –
[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: – Ms. Bothner did take
out nomination papers and in 1980 became a Town
Meeting member and has been a Town Meeting member
ever since. Ms. Bothner, thank you for your 37
years of service to our town.
[Standing ovation.]

THE MODERATOR: At this time, I’ll ask
the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for a
motion to dispense with the reading of the
warrant, except for the officers return.

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, I move
we dispense with the reading of the warrant, with
the exception of the Officer’s Return.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. You’ve all heard
the main motion to dispense with the reading of
the warrant. All those in favor, signify by
saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.
[None opposed.]
THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it unanimous.

At this time, I’ll read the Officer’s Return of the Warrant. By virtue of this warrant, I have this day notified and summoned the inhabitants of the Town of Falmouth qualified to vote on Town affairs, as said warrant directs, by posting an attested copy thereof in Town Hall and in every precinct of the Town. Signed, Constable Ronald Braga.

Mr. Clerk, I ask that the warrant become an official part of the record for this meeting.

At this time, the Chair would entertain a motion for non-Town Meeting members to sit up front with their respective Boards and Committees. So moved.

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous.

At this time the chair would entertain a
motion for all Town employees who are not
residents of the Town to speak on any article
before the Special Town Meeting.

So moved. All those in favor signify
by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it
unanimous.

There’s no notification of public
hearing since there are no Planning Board
articles. And so we will begin with Article 1.

Article 1, to see if the Town will vote
to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into
negotiations with the owners of the Tony Andrews
Farm property. The Finance Committee for the
main motion.

CHAIRMAN VOGEL: Mr. Moderator, I move
Article 1 as recommended.

THE MODERATOR: As recommended. Okay.

We have our opening presentation for Article 1.

MS. WHRITENOUR: Good evening. I’m
Jessica Whritenour, the Administrator for The 300
Committee Land Trust, and I would like to begin by requesting some additional time for this presentation. I reached out to David earlier today and explained that we have a presentation planned and we’re asking for an additional ten minutes. So for a total of a 20 minute presentation.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, you’ve all heard the request for an additional ten minutes for the opening presentation on Article 1. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds and we have a 20 minute opening.

MS. WHRITENOUR: We have a video to show. So, the subject of the article, of course, is the petition article that The 300 Committee put forward with 350 signatures that we collected in a two day period, with the goal of preserving Tony Andrews Farm and the surrounding Andrews family land.

So we’re going to start with our video
and then we’ll present the detailed information
on the land package.

[Video played.]

[Applause.]

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, just a
point of order. I just want to check to make
sure the recommendation we’re working on is
actually the recommendation –

THE MODERATOR: So the recommendation
had been changed from what’s in your warrant
booklet. So we’re just trying to make – see if
we have an overhead on that.

CHAIRMAN JONES: It was up earlier.

THE MODERATOR: Oh, it was, the new
language?

CHAIRMAN JONES: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: So let’s pause the
clock for a minute. Yeah, so let’s just call
your attention – the recommendation needed some
additional language, so it’s slightly different
than what is written in your warrant booklet. It
effects the same action but is written
differently.

So we just want to make sure that Town
Meeting members are clear on what the main motion is. And so here is the recommendation that is the main motion on the floor.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: It authorizes the Board of Selectmen to enter into negotiations on the property. It defines the property. And it’s to transfer the sum of $225,000.00 from Certified Free Cash, of which $200,000.00 shall be for a refundable deposit to bind a purchase and sale agreement and $25,000.00 shall be for the performance of due diligence activities related to the acquisition. Said funds to be expended under the jurisdiction of the Town Manager.

Thank you, Mr. Jones.

Okay, Ms. Whritenour.

MS. WHRITENOUR: Very good, thank you.

Do I advance the slides from here?

Okay.

Okay, we’re going to begin just with the overview of what is the land package that we’re looking at now. The Andrews Family Land did go on the market at the end of December. And when it was first listed, it was a 60 acre land
package for $4.4 million. The size of the land package has reduced. There were 11 buildable lots that have been put under agreement with a private buyer. So they’re no longer part of the package. So we’re going to clarify this evening the package that we’re looking at is what’s shown here.

Oops, excuse me. Does this have a – okay, hold on a moment, I have a pointer. I don’t know how to – okay. We’ll just – we’ll carry on, but what I can do is just explain that the properties outlined in green, 9.84 acres are what we’re calling the Ronnie Road properties. Those lands are right on Pond 14, that’s the water body that you see there. Sandwich Road is in the top corner of the map, there, and Old Meetinghouse Road is on the far right-hand side. So that gives you a sense of perspective of where we are in town.

The 9.8 acres on Pond 14 is within the Coonamessett River Corridor, which has long been an important area for land protection for the Town and for The 300 Committee.

Next slide, thank you, Peter. Great.
So this is what we’re describing as the Ronnie Road properties. The farm-related parcels are 36 \( \frac{1}{2} \) acres; they include the two large farm parcels plus a quarter acre lot that includes a house. So this land package is the farm, the farm stand and two single family homes. The 36.5 acre land package is the subject of this Town Meeting article. It is one land package, but The 300 Committee would be purchasing the land on Pond 14 and we’re working towards a Town purchase of the farm-related properties.

And just a description, what this article does: authorizes the Board of Selectmen to execute a purchase and sale agreement. It authorizes the Selectmen to apply for Community Preservation and other grants, and it will appropriate funds for a refundable down payment and the due diligence expenses towards the farm purchase.

Very pleased to be able to announce this evening that, through working together with the Town of Falmouth and The 300 Committee Land Trust Board of Directors, we’ve reached an agreement with the Andrews family on the sale of this 46
acre land package for the Town’s purchase of the
farm and for The 300 Committee’s purchase of the
land on Ronnie Road. That 46 acre land package,
the agreed upon price is 2.95 million. The price
for the farm is two million, inclusive of that.

We have included contingencies, standard
contingencies, title exam, environmental site
assessments and very importantly contingencies
for funding approvals at November Town Meeting.

Leonard Johnson from The 300 Committee’s
Board of Directors will speak in a few minutes
about the funding plan. So we will provide you
with that overview. And also, Mike Duffany from
The 300 Committee’s Board of Directors will speak
to the planning and the work that’s going into
the vision for the land to continue to function
as a working farm.

The agreement in principal is aiming for
a closing by the end of this year. So we’re
looking at closing by December 31st, 2017.

Some background on how did we get here.
With the land going on the market at the end of
December, a lot has happened in short order in
terms of The 300 Committee working in earnest
with the Town and with the Working Group, which includes the Falmouth Agricultural Commission and the Falmouth Preservation Alliance. In fact, our history of awareness of this parcel of course goes back many decades, and we know that this land has long been such an important part of Falmouth’s agricultural heritage.

As an open space parcel, The 300 Committee recognized it long ago, after its formation in the mid-1980's as significant land from an agricultural standpoint and of course the land within the Coonamessett River Corridor.

More recently, we’ve been in discussions with the Andrews family since 2014. So that did provide an opportunity for The 300 Committee to complete site visits and our evaluation. And the essence of the importance we found in this property is the agricultural land, the opportunity to preserve permanent working farmland for this community. And that’s what we’ve been hearing loud and clear from folks from our – from across the community, that they want us to take advantage of this opportunity to preserve and protect this important landscape.
And the land package is made even more attractive because it includes land within the Coonamessett River Corridor. So we’re getting really valuable open space for conservation and we’re getting really valuable land to preserve agricultural heritage and working farmland.

The proposed time line. So, again, the vote this evening is the request for the $200,000 for the down payment, which is refundable and would be paid to the family after a purchase and sale agreement is executed. The $25,000 is for the due diligence costs of the surveying and the environmental site assessment and the title exam.

The November Town Meeting package will return with a proposal. We’re applying for Community Preservation Funds and we’ll also be requesting some additional Town funds, and there will be a significant portion that The 300 Committee will begin raising through a campaign that will launch as soon as the purchase and sale agreements are signed. And, again, the closing is by the end of the year.

I’m now going to introduce Leonard Johnson to speak to the funding plan.
Thank you.

MR. JOHNSON: Leonard Johnson, Precinct 5. Thank you, Jessica. I’m going to go through just briefly –

If I can get this to work. Which one do I push, this one? There we go.

We are going to follow a basically relying on three funding sources for this purchase. This is very similar to the pattern that we used for Teaticket Park: funds from the Town, funds from the state. We’ve been very fortunate in being able to get land grants from the state. And we’ve been extraordinarily fortunate over the years to raise money from our donors who have made major contributions to the purchase of open space in Falmouth for a number of years.

We used this pattern for Teaticket Park. We also used it for the Daddario parcel that we closed on last week. In that case, we leveraged funds, 200,000 from the Community Preservation Committee and the Town funds. The state put in 400,000 and we had private funds of 800,000. Each of those parties likes the deal to work this
way because they are able to leverage the funds
that they put into these various projects.

Again in this case, working with the
Town, one of our goals is to reduce as much as we
can the amount of money that the Town needs to
commit to this project. If we’re as successful
as we hope we will be, raising money privately,
that will enable us all to reduce the commitment
that the Town needs to make to the project.

As Jessica has explained, this is a two
step process. We’re asking you, as she
explained, to begin the process here in April and
we will come back with another funding package in
November. Here’s a little bit more detail on
that. Jessica has reviewed that we are
requesting tonight a $200,000 from Certified Free
Cash for a refundable deposit and 25,000 for due
diligence for the issues that she mentioned.

We will come back in November with a
proposal for financing the remaining
$1,800,000.00 balance of the purchase price. We
will begin - the Town funds you see as indicated
in November Town Meeting. The Community
Preservation Committee funds we’ve already begun
discussions with the Community Preservation Committee. And we will be applying for the Community Preservation Committee -- actually application begins later this month and the state land proposal will need to be in by mid-summer.

By November we will have a good idea of the amount of money that we’ve been able to raise from our donors for this project. We’ve already been in some preliminary discussions with some of them and they’ve come to us and said, “We really want to contribute to this project.”

As Jessica’s mentioned, The 300 Committee will be buying the six pond front lots on Ronnie Road. We will be applying to the state for an $85,000.00 state Conservation Partnership Grant that will – that is available for non-profits. We have felt right along, as Jessica mentioned, that this is a critical area from the standpoint of preserving and protecting the Coonamessett River and Pond 14, and it’s been a part of a very long commitment on our part to the Coonamessett River Corridor. The late Bess Horsman, as whom you may all remember, was very instrumental in keeping us focused on doing that,
and I’m sure she’ll be — would be enormously pleased that we’re able to go ahead with this.

So, the plan is for our donors to contribute to the purchase of the farm, to contribute to the Town’s acquisition of the farm and to purchase the properties on Pond 14, the pond front lots.

As a final note before I turn this over to Mike, the real estate taxes paid on the 36 acres, the farm parcels, the houses and pond 14 lots, pond front lots, last year were between 13 and 14 thousand dollars. The Town will lose that revenue, obviously, if this plan goes through. On the other hand, I would point out that the development of the properties on Colonel’s Way and in Hikens Way that Jessica mentioned, will bring in revenue for the Town that will far exceed that amount.

Mike.

MR. DUFFANY: Thank you, Leonard. Michael Duffany, Precinct 6. Also a member of the Board of Directors and worked on the negotiations with the Andrews family for quite some time on this, here.
So, where do we go from here?

Everybody’s asking the obvious question, what we’re going to do next.

And which button is it? That button, okay.

So, in one of our meetings it was brought to our attention that there was a group of folks that had already gotten underway just as we were really getting into some earnest negotiations and would I go to this meeting at Town Hall to meet with the group and to see what, you know, what they need to do, if you will, to try to help bring this to the Town Meeting.

So, and in that, we needed to develop strategies for maintaining the farm as a working farm. We need to identify lessons that have been learned and from successful models from other communities that this works in. We also need to try to create opportunities to provide local food for the community and then of course we want to provide educational resources for teaching the importance of the local farms and food production and to help in developing new farmers.
So, I go to this meeting and I walk in and there’s Stan Ingram from the agricultural commission, Susan Shepard and Todd Bidwell from the Preservation Alliance, Karen Schwalbe, again, and Matt Churchill and Jen Christian from the Ag people, as well, already gathering without anybody prompting them from on our behalf, if you will. So I was really thrilled to see this group already coming together to show the interest that they have in preserving the farm.

That said, you can’t begin to negotiate with the farmer-to-be, if you will, or start to enter into any serious discussions about what we might do, because we don’t own the land. So, your vote this evening would be helpful in us carrying the next step forward, but we also - to say we have had a lot of discussions amongst ourselves - especially amongst their selves, because The 300 Committee is not - we’re not farmers.

We’re very involved in this because we have been approached by so many of you folks and others in the town to see that this be preserved, and I think it’s wonderful that they looked to
The 300 Committee for that to, you know, “What are you going to do to save this?” So, this is what we’re doing to try to save this for you and for all of us for future generations.

And this group, this working group is going to continue to work on a plan. I use the term that the plan is to work on a plan for the farm. As simple as that might seem, it’s going to be very involved. There’s going to be some sessions in the Herman Room at the library that you want to pay attention to, please, to have some input. We’re looking for public input to these meetings to, you know, for to do some brainstorming and to see what other people think will make this a successful adventure for the Town, or venture for the Town.

So, that said, I think we’re off to a good start. We have a good working group with the right people that are knowledgeable in this area and we will be back in the fall and hopefully we’ll have a solid plan to bring to you that will help to preserve this legacy for a long time to come.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, discussion on
Article one?

Ms. Lichtenstein.

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: Leslie Lichtenstein, Precinct 8.

I support this; I hope you vote for it. But even more importantly I hope you commit to keeping this land in agriculture. 39 percent of Falmouth is zoned agricultural but there’s only a teeny-tiny part that’s used for actual farming.

In 1970, only 7.7 percent of our land was actively being farmed. By the year 2000, it was down to 6.6. We lost 17 percent of our agricultural land in 30 years. Not too bad. But, by 2014 we were down to under two percent of Falmouth’s agricultural lands actually be in active agriculture. That means that in 14 years we lost 72 percent.

If Falmouth agricultural lands were a bird species, with that low number and that quick a decline, the federal government would declare it an endangered species. We need to vote this and we need to make sure that it stays in agriculture.

I’ve done a lot of work in Central
America. The Mayan culture a couple of thousand years ago was the height of technology. They built great cities, temples. The only problem was: they built it on their agricultural land. They pushed farms out; they couldn’t feed themselves. They didn’t have the planes and trains and boats that we have to bring our food in from China or Europe or South America.

We need to do something. We need not only to buy it, but we need to protect it. We are very lucky to have The 300 Committee and the Con Com. They’ve done a wonderful job keeping open space here. They don’t really deal with agriculture. We need to make sure when we acquire this property that it goes under the Ag Commission and that the Selectmen are committed to keeping this in agriculture. We can’t afford to lose any more of it.

Falmouth used to have five active dairies. We provided milk for not only the Cape but the South Shore. Has anybody seen a cow lately?

[Laugher.]

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: I brought one just
in case.  [Holds up a toy cow].  You haven’t
seen the Falmouth cow?  Okay.

What I’d like tonight from all of you is
to make sure that this little strawberry, here,
[holds up a large toy strawberry] doesn’t go the
way of the cow.  Okay?  And, just in case you
really aren’t turned on by agriculture, think
about this as historic preservation, because
remember this guy and a lot of his little friends
built one of Falmouth’s most beautiful little
churches.  Thank you.

Please, vote for the strawberry.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR:  Ms. Connolly.

I’ll put you on the list, Mr. Donald.

MS. CONNOLLY:  I’m shell shocked from

last night.

Anne Connolly, Precinct 6.  So I have
two questions.  First, what’s the plan for the
structures on the lot?  I think Jess said that
there were two.  And then secondly, you know,
not to be a buzz kill, but what if the farming of
the public land doesn’t end up working?  What
happens to the land then?
THE MODERATOR: Mr Duffany.

MR. DUFFANY: Well, the two buildings that are on the – the residences that are there, it’s, again, way early to decide what we want to do. But if the Town decided that it wanted to part with those, to recoup some of its money, that could be the case. We had hoped that that wouldn’t be the case, especially right out of the gate, because we need a place for the farmer to live. And, again, I’m going to get ahead of myself on the negotiation piece. So. And I don’t want to do that.

So, worst case scenario is if this cannot be worked out, we would still like to see this preserved, you know, become one of the largest pocket parks in town, and but that’s – again, that’s a fallback position. Just so everybody understands. That’s not where we’re coming from, but we do need to have a fallback position and we want to see this land preserved in perpetuity if we can, as well.

Hope that answers your question.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Donald.

MR. DONALD: Malcolm Donald, Precinct
My question is will the farmland be put under an agricultural preservation restriction. If not, why not? And if it’s not going to be, what would stop it from becoming the new headquarters for the DPW?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON: We will look at the possibility of putting an agricultural restriction on it. That tends to be much more restrictive and is really the purpose of the Commonwealth’s program for agricultural preservation restriction, is to give the farmer money so that the farmer can continue to farm. That’s really not the case here.

It’s – I called it the other day the triple play. This property will have a conservation restriction on it; that’s a requirement of the Community Preservation Committee. It’s a requirement of the state land program and it basically is something – we can’t raise money from our donors for agricultural land and open space if we don’t protect it. If they’re going to give us money, they have to have
the assurance that that land will be forever used
for what they intended the donation to purchase.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Mr. Alliegro.

MR. ALLIEGRO: Mark Alliegro, Precinct
7.

Those numbers on our loss of
agricultural land are unfortunate and concerning
and so I just have a question. What if — what
are the major factors that have led to that
decline in agricultural land and do we see any of
those potentially at play in the future of this
parcel?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Duffany.

MR. DUFFANY: I would ask if somebody
from the Ag Committee is here, the Ag Commission.
Because, again, we’re not farmers.

THE MODERATOR: In the aisle, okay.

MR. INGRAM: Hi. Stan Ingram, Falmouth
Ag Commission.

One of the things some of you may have
noticed in town — I certainly have — is when I
came in late ’80’s there were a lot of people
that were much older than I but were still
farming some of these little plots of land here
and there around town; but if you added them all up together it come to quite a - quite a chunk of land. Well, those people have since passed on and their children, grandchildren, have just let that land go.

What one of our visions for this possibility for this farm is as an incubator farm, a place where young farmers can get their feet wet at actually growing on a commercial scale without having to put up the money that they would have to if they went out and had to buy the land and the infrastructure their selves.

So, that’s what we’re trying to do, is have a place, an active agricultural farm owned by the Town that can serve as a stepping stone - not a permanent resident. That’s not what our idea is. But a stepping stone for young people or middle aged people who want to get their feet wet trying out farming and then, if they’re successful, then they can go on and get a piece of land and feel comfortable that they could make it work.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Donahue.

MR. DONAHUE: Bob Donahue, Precinct 3.
My question is, like many other things, we don’t have any options in this. This isn’t Plan A, Plan B; this is just Plan A, take it or leave it, folks. And I don’t like that. I see other things we could use that land for, such as housing for the working poor, that kind of thing. I know there’s groans when I say things like that, but this is something the Town needs desperately. We all say it but we never do anything about it.

The second question, through you, Mr. Moderator, if anyone can answer me: will the Town be on the hook for any other financial commitments to supporting the farm? Here again, and if so, how much money is involved in doing that type of thing?

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Duffany. Do you want to answer – respond, or? Yeah, yeah, Mr. Duffany.

MR. DUFFANY: So, we do have, as we said, we do have a position if we’re not able to do that. Right now, this tonight is earnest money for us to continue negotiations and try to
come up with a good, solid plan. So we come
back to you in the fall and you make the final
decision to purchase this. Hopefully that will
be the case, but we’re not – we’re not committing
the Town this evening to anything that it can’t
get – that can’t be reversed if it doesn’t work
out between now and November.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Vogel.

MR. DUFFANY: And there’s a lot of
private money that’s being raised; I think that
that’s very important. You notice we’re not
going to the ballot for this.

CHAIRMAN VOGEL: Wendy Vogel, Precinct
4.

This article is an interesting one and
the lots along the waterway appeal to me as
watershed protection and being part of the
Coonamessett Corridor. I feel it’s a little
unfortunate that the farm is tied into it in a
way because I’m not sure that the Town buying it
is the best way to keep it a farm. It may be
that a farmer buying it would be the best way to
keep it a farm.

I’d certainly like to see, if it’s voted
in the affirmative tonight, financials on the existing farm. So, if it’s a going concern, can we continue to keep it a going concern, or is it going to require Town funds on an annual basis to sustain it; or if it goes to just open space, to maintain it.

So, as a Finance Committee Chair, those are my concerns. Philosophically, farming is dying out for many reasons. If we can keep some farms, I’m all for it. But I’m not sure that the Town owning a farm is the best approach.

And the other part of it is, we have a lot of conversations about affordable housing and, as a realtor, I know that the coastal areas are the most expensive and the open land in the middle is where – I don’t want to use the term affordable housing, because that has a regulatory connotation – more reasonably priced housing is built there.

So, there are a lot of things that could happen with this land and I think that we should put a lot of thought into it and not casually buy a farm that could end up costing us a lot of money. Cranberry farming was tried by the Town
and that didn’t work out and now it’s going a
different way. And the golf course is used by
many, but every time an article is brought to us
to approve for additional spending for the golf
course, there’s a lot of grumbling.

So I hope that some deep thought about
the financial viability of this will go into the
presentation we see in the fall.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Shepard.

MS. SHEPARD: Thank you. Susan
Shepard, Precinct 1.

 Probably very few of you know that I
grew up on a farm. Didn’t leave the farm until
I went off to college. I was very interested in
this project.

 I want to remind Town Meeting what we’re
voting on tonight. We are voting on $200,000,
which is completely refundable unless Town
Meeting agrees with the plans and funding that we
put forward in November. So all you’re risking
is the $25,000 that is going to due diligence.
And we might not even use all of that. And it
needs to be done regardless if we’re going to
contemplate this at all.

So, the group is working very hard on a plan for a plan; by the time Fall Town Meeting rolls around, we will come to you with both a short term and long term proposed management plan. And, in the process of developing that, we will be seeking input from the public.

So, remember, you’re voting $200,000, which is completely refundable until the end of the year if we don’t agree on what we’re doing. I think it’s premature to talk about the plans. We will be bringing those plans to you in the fall.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: Mr. Moderator, fellow Town Meeting members, growing up in the town of Falmouth - I was actually born here - and I actually picked strawberries on Trotting Park Road. And I’ve watched the farmlands in the Teaticket and East Falmouth area disappear. In the 45 years that I’ve been a Town Meeting member, I have voted for any large parcel of property that we could possibly get our hands on.
This – when I read this article, I felt it was a no brainer, that there really couldn’t be anybody that would be against putting up $200,000 and maybe even getting it back if it didn’t feel.

I happen to own a farm; I’ve owned it for the last 30-odd years. I’ve never wanted to develop it. I call it my own piece of open space.

So, rather than prolong a discussion of why we shouldn’t, let’s take a real hard look and see the acquisition of this many acres. How many more of these acres are going to become available? And my knowledge of the disappearance of farmland throughout the entire Town of Falmouth, to me, I worry about what we’re leaving, the legacy that we would be leaving if we didn’t take this opportunity.

So I would hope any future discussions would be in a positive direction, possibly somebody get up and move the motion. Move the question. It’s a no-win situation. I mean a win-win situation, I’m sorry.

[Laughter.]
MR. DUFRESNE: I never saw a piece of open space I wouldn’t like to buy.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, Brent Putnam, Precinct 9.

The question was raised is whether this was a premature discussion about what will happen to this parcel if the Town owns it. And I don’t think it’s premature. I think tonight we set the tone; we set the direction. We make it very clear where we want the Town to go with this. So I think the discussions about how to maintain farming on these parcels are a very important one.

I would hope that Karen has the opportunity to come up here and speak and I don’t mean to put her on the spot –

THE MODERATOR: She’s actually next on the list.

MR. PUTNAM: Awesome.

But I know, my understanding – and some of you know I was involved in a little cranberry bog spat a few years ago – that the biggest cost of farming is land, especially in a place like
Massachusetts which has not a whole lot of land.
We’re a very densely populated state. But
ironically Massachusetts -- and I might be a
little off, but a few years ago, at least, my
understanding was Massachusetts was actually one
of the few if not the only state in the country
where farming was increasing. Where we were
actually getting more farmers, and not less.
And the reason why is because there’s a growing
understanding that the food we get and how we get
it and where we get it from is very important.
And all of those factory farms in the Midwest
where the land is consolidated and maintained and
operated by large companies and large factory
equipment isn’t really as good as what we can get
from right here in our own backyard.

So I think one of the things we need to
do is avoid – and it was suggested here that the
Town could make money off of this, and I think
that’s a very inappropriate way to look at this.
The idea is not for the Town to make money. That
was one of the arguments that was floated about
with the cranberry bogs and it really was not a
good argument, because farming does sometimes
lose money. If you have a bad — if you have not
a lot of rain, you’re going to get a drought.
And when you get —
[Whereupon, power went out. Mr. Putnam continued
speaking off the record. Then the Moderator
announced that there was a massive power outage that
was affecting the entire Town and he was continuing
the Town Meeting using emergency lighting. The
Moderator called Karen Schwalbe up to the podium, and
she addressed Town Meeting. The beginning of her
talk I recorded by iPhone:]

MS. SCHWALBE: Thank you, everybody.
Karen Schwalbe, I am the [inaudible] of the
Agricultural Commission, and also the Executive
Director of the Southeastern Massachusetts
Agricultural Partnership. We represent farmers
and farming and support both in Norfolk County.
I do want to tell you that farming is
growing in Massachusetts. We are number three
in direct sales [inaudible].
[Whereupon, the power came on.]

THE MODERATOR: One, two. Okay, try
it.

MS. SCHWALBE: There we go; I don’t
have to holler.

We do get farmers looking for land quite frequently. As Brent Putnam said, the biggest issue is access to land. Two million dollars for a farmer to buy himself for the margin on farming is not possible.

So, with the vision and help of the Town, I think we can preserve a big parcel of land prime for agriculture, support our farming, teach our farming. An incubator farm in combination with existing farmland. And 36 acres we could do a lot with.

So, I do respect the concern of Ms. Vogel for the property not to become an economic burden to the Town, but farming can work. It can be financially viable in the long term, and we can set up business plans, mechanisms, to make sure that farming is a viable option for the parcel.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

FROM THE FLOOR: Question, question.

THE MODERATOR: Dr. Antonucci.

DR. ANTONUCCI: Yeah, Bob Antonucci,
Precinct 6. I speak in favor of this article and hope that we pass it tonight, and also look forward to the November Town Meeting and passing it then.

Just a little story. Many of you know I served as president of Fitchburg State University in north-central Mass. In the adjourning town where I was born, the City of Leominster had an apple farm called Sholan Farm. And in a plastic city, having a farm was a novelty. The City was smart enough to buy that farm some ten or fifteen years ago and today they farm it as an apple farm, and it works very well. It’s supported by volunteers; it’s supported by the Town. It has brought revenue into the city and it has become a place where parents, children, can go in the fall and in the spring and really know what farming is all about.

So, I think if we did this, the strawberry would be the apple of Falmouth, but we would have our children go to that farm. We would find someone to run the farm. Let’s not worry about what’s going to happen because it can’t go wrong.
So I would move the question.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Cook. Mr. Cook. Anything new?

MR. COOK: Nothing new that’s been said already. My family comes from a family of farmers back to 1720 in Pennsylvania. I’m sure everybody here in this room has somebody who has had a farm or farmer or something touch your family.

I agree, let’s move the question.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Alliegro. Remember, you can’t speak and then move the question.

Ms. Alliegro. All set?

Okay, Ms. Braga.

MS. BRAGA: Just very briefly. I just wanted to speak to the cultural piece of this that hasn’t been raised. We have a very unique history. We are, you know, a town that had an amazing influx of immigrants to this community. And I think that the legacy and the connection with the Cape Verdean history of this town is tied into this piece and it’s something that we
shouldn’t forget.

There’s a component of value that everyone has just discussed about agriculture, open space, but there’s a cultural piece of this, as well. And that’s truly a part of our story as a town and I think it’s one of the real added values to this potential purchase.

And, again, you know, it’s just the beginning of the negotiations, so we’ll have far more information in the fall. But I think this - this is the whole - this is the real deal, as far as what it can offer to the Town. So I would hope that you would vote for it.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Noonan.

MR. NOONAN: [No mic:] Mr. Moderator, I move the question.

THE MODERATOR: We have a motion to move the previous question.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: All those in favor, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.
THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds.

The question will come on the main motion as recommended on the original slide. Basically appropriation of $225,000. $200,000 for the down payment, $25,000.00 for due diligence. Coming from Certified Free Cash and under the jurisdiction of the Town Manager for negotiating the purchase of the Tony Andrews Farm.

This requires a two-thirds vote because of the property interest. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The opinion of the chair is that the ayes have it unanimously.

[Cheers and applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Article 2. Article 2 is to see if the Board of Selectmen - what’s that?

Yup, they just wanted me to announce that you all know that the farm will continue to
operate this year while this negotiation is in process. So.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Article 2, to see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for special home rule legislation to impose a room occupancy tax.

Mr. Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, I move Article 2 as recommended.

THE MODERATOR: As recommended.

Do we have a presentation?

CHAIRMAN JONES: The presentation is this is an Article that we have seen before. It is something that we’ve passed at Town Meeting a number of years. Often this Article goes to the state legislature; it doesn’t make it out of committee. We have been given some hope that this is actually one time it will get out of committee and might actually move forward to provide rooms tax to properties beyond just the hotels and the B&B’s.
THE MODERATOR: Okay, discussion on Article 2?

MR. HEATH: Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Mr. Heath.

Yes, I’ll add you to the list.

Mr. Heath.

MR. HEATH: Is this working? Austin Heath, Precinct 8.

As written, I don’t approve of this article. The long-term rentals of a month, two months, half a season, full season historically down here have been untaxed and aren’t in competition with other facilities that are available. Recently we have Internet companies that are renting or allowing people to rent a room within a home. This is normally for a short period of time and not to a family.

I would like to propose an amendment that the word “ninety” days be shortened to eight days. This means that short term rentals of a room within a home where they usually provide linen and everything else in competition with a hotel would be subject to the tax. This is fairly easily ascertainable because it’s listed
on the Internet. It has a chance of being enforceable.

For the longer term rentals, there are a number of people with summer homes that will rent it for one month and use it the rest of the season. This isn’t in competition with any of our existing businesses. It’s not in competition with B&Bs and other registered sellers of one room at a time.

There’s no real need to explain it any more. That’s my reason for it. I don’t think that we should be trying to tax seasonal rentals or one month rentals of private property. I don’t think there’s need for a lot of debate on the issue or we’ll be here on Saturday night, also.

Am I allowed to move the question?

FROM THE FLOOR: No.

THE MODERATOR: No, discussion’s open on the amendment to change from 90 days to 8 consecutive days.

Mr. Putnam.

Mr. Donahue, you want to speak on the amendment as well? Okay.
So we’re on the amendment, now, so don’t raise your hand unless you want to be on the new list for the amendment. When we dispense with that, then we’ll go back to the main motion.

Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: Thank you, Mr. Moderator, Brent Putnam, Precinct 9. I’m going to ask that you vote against this amendment. What happens if it’s a nine day rental? Or a ten day rental? Or a two week rental? It says 90 consecutive days or less. We’ve gone through this before, folks. When I was a Selectman - some of you remember that, too. When I was a Selectman, we talked about this, we put it on the ballot, we asked you all to approve this; you did. We sent it to the state for the first time and we’ve done it multiple times in the years since. And the reason why is because there was one time I had a conversation with the owner of a B&B. That gentleman sold the B&B. The B&B thankfully is still open. But he was telling me about how he was walking down Main Street and was approached by a gentleman who said, “Are you staying in
Falmouth?" And he decided to play along.

"Yeah, I’m staying in Falmouth." He was like,

“How much are you paying for your room?” He said, “I can save you almost ten percent right off the top.” And the reason why is because the house this guy wanted to rent was not being taxed the way the hotels, motels and B&Bs are, so they would have saved ten percent right off the top. In the hotel room tax.

Our B&Bs are at a disadvantage, folks. A number of them have gone out of business over the years. Yes, those house rentals have an effect because people come into town for weddings and other large events and they rent a house instead of renting five rooms at a B&B or at the hotel. And all of those room taxes come back into our coffers. Let’s put that to good use. I suggest you vote this down.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Any further discussion on the amendment? Back right.

MR. MURPHY: Dennis Murphy, Precinct 5. I’m actually going to make the argument that what Brent said doesn’t affect the B&Bs and
the hotels. He said people come to town for
weddings; they’re not coming for eight days for a
wedding; they’re coming for two nights. I’d
suggest that we make this amendment six nights or
less, because the people that rent their house
out by the week are the ones that need our
protection here in this room. Okay? So those
are the – if we get rid of the one week rentals,
don’t tax those. Just tax the ones that the
hotels say are the competition, which are the
two, three, four night rentals, those are the
ones that we could possibly agree with a tax.

Now, the hotel/motel lobby, I call it,
says this is a fairness issue. I disagree
completely that it’s a fairness issue for the
Town of Falmouth. If we actually approve this
amendment or even this article, we’d be one of
four towns in the state of Massachusetts out of
351 that would tax our vacation rentals. One of
four, the only one on the Upper Cape, the only
one on Mid Cape, even. Nobody else. So that,
talk about fairness. Who’s going to stay away
from Falmouth when Falmouth is determined to be
unfriendly to second home owners, to tourists and
to visitors? If even only a portion of people stay away from Falmouth, what’s that going to do to all of our property values? It’s going to send them down.

So I think the fairness issue has been monopolized by the hotel/motel/B&B lobby, when really it’s a fairness issue if this tax is going to come in. Right now, it’s up at the State House as a proposal to be put in statewide. That, possibly, we could deal with. Coming in on an individual town level is insane to do that.

Last night I sat here and I heard person after person talk about our tourists and our visitors and how important they are for us and our town. Why are we going to start chasing them away? The vacation rental business, very near and dear to me, is very price sensitive. If we start adding more taxes onto this, it’s going to be that much more difficult.

Lastly, right now we’re already taxing our second homeowners more than you and me and everyone else in this room. They already pay an excise tax on their property. Yeah, that’s right, on their beds, their couches, their
T.V.’s, their tables. We’re already taxing these people out of existence. We need these people. That’s the reason our property taxes are so low, is because of all these second homeowners that come in and don’t use our services year round. Why are we alienating them by creating this tax, one of only four towns in the state to request it?

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Putnam. On the amendment?


I am not in favor of the amendment. Either way, I say that the original as written should be voted, and also just to clarify one thing that Mr. Murphy was just bringing up. The excise tax that people pay on second homes, don’t let that scare you. It runs, for a $480,000 house, they pay $80 to $100 per quarter extra. It is not that much. It is not going to scare somebody off from owning a second home in the Town of Falmouth. That’s just a scare tactic.

So please, vote this amendment down.
THE MODERATOR: Any further discussion on the amendment? Hearing none, the question will come on the amendment to change the 90 consecutive days to 8 consecutive days.

All those in favor of the amendment, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: It’s the opinion of the chair that the no’s have it by a majority and the amendment does not pass.

Now we’re back to my original list. Mr. Dynan.

MR. DYNAN: Thank you, Mr. Moderator, ladies and gentlemen, Bill Dynan, Precinct 5.

Falmouth is a tourist destination. Several presentations during the Town Meeting have stated that. Forty percent - I’ll say it again - 40 percent of Falmouth homeowners, or 7200 homes out of 18,000, are summer homes. Forty percent. Some of those 7200 homes rent their houses during the summer to families. The silent minority of 7200 homeowners pay full real
estate taxes -- like us, we’re full-time -- plus
a personal property tax which was brought up a
little while ago, the furnishings. Which total
the Town $226,000. That’s quite a bit of money,
even though it’s only $80 a house. It’s still
money. It’s an additional tax they’re paying.

I live in New Silver Beach, where 75
percent of the homes are occupied in the summer.
These summer homes help pay the Town’s total
budget $128,000. And 46,000 of that is the
school budget. 7200 homes with no children in
the school system pay part of that, the $46
million budget. That’s pretty good. We have a
good deal with that, I can tell you that right
now.

The 7200 summer homes also for eight
months have less stress on our roads, trash,
water service, sewage, septic, senior services,
fire and police. After September, it gets very
quite around here; they go home. It’s nice.

Some say they should pay their fair
share. I say they already do. They rent their
houses to pay their taxes, their mortgage and
their maintenance. They don’t vote in Falmouth
but they support our efforts to make Falmouth a
great vacation town.

   Please don’t hurt our family tourist
business. It helps pay all our town bills and
all our salaries.

   A few Cape towns, it was mentioned –
Provincetown, Truro, Wellfleet and Brewster have
accepted this revenue tax. Yes, it’s all about
the money, it’s all about the money.

   The 1300-plus motel rooms in Falmouth
are at full capacity all summer. All summer.
They’re full. Let’s not become a rent police
Town. What’s a rent police town? Trying to
determine if a house is rented or family guests
occupy the house to collect the six percent would
be hard to do, and I happened to bump into the
Chief - I don’t know if he’s here tonight - at
the post office today and he says, “Does that
mean I can add more staff to collect the money?”
I said, “Well, if it passes, maybe.”

   Please keep Falmouth a great tourist
destination and vote no on question 2.

   Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Kasparian.
MR. KASPARIAN: Michael Kasparian, Precinct 5, President of the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce.

I’m here to support this article. We’ve heard a lot of pros and cons tonight. I completely disagree. The Board of Directors completely disagree with the arguments about scaring people away. The reality is there is not a level playing field here in Falmouth. The reality is if you want to own a second home here, that’s great. But if you’re renting it out, you’re exchanging goods and services for monies. You’re in business.

The men and women who own the hotels, motels and B&Bs are struggling to survive. We do not have 100 percent capacity. We do not have 1300 rooms left in Falmouth anymore. That number is just hovering above a thousand. We speak to bed and breakfast owners, inns, and they struggle. They have to pay bills and this tax is not paid unless the room is rented out.

If somebody wants to own a home here and they want to enjoy it and have family come down, that makes sense. But if they’re going to
collect money to rent that room, they should pay
- the people that are renting that room should
pay the same as they would if they were going to
stay in a bed and breakfast or a hotel, for a
level playing field.

The argument was made about how they go
away, the people will come and they go away in
the autumn and we go back to a quiet town. That
doesn’t – that’s not part of what this is all
about. In the summer, police, EMT, trash
collection is still stressed. Those things
still take place and the Town, I think, has very
well thought this out.

The 90 days make sense. It takes into
consideration people who are here, students, all
the people who are working seasonally, and other
people who are going to be renting things
temporarily.

So I would really urge Town Meeting to
really take a look at your neighbors, the men and
women who are trying to make a living here all
year long by renting their rooms out, and see
whether or not it’s fair and support this
article.
Thank you.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Mr. McCaffrey.

MR. MCCAFFREY: [No mic:] Charles McCaffrey, Precinct 5.

THE MODERATOR: With a microphone, please.

MR. MCCAFFREY: Lost my pants, here.

[Laughter.]

MR. MCCAFFREY: First of all, I participate in Airbnb and the first part of my comment is I think I know what it is, but if Mr. Duffy would explain the exception in Mass. General Law.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Duffy.

MR. DUFFY: The article provides that it’s specifically exempted from General Laws but excludes those accommodations specifically exempted from General Laws Chapter 64G and section 2 of that chapter. And they are: lodging accommodations at federal or state or municipal institutions. I don’t know what that is, maybe jails or something, but.

[Laughter.]
MR. DUFFY: Lodging accommodations including dormitories at religious or charitable or education or philanthropic institutions. Privately owned and operated convalescent homes and homes for the aged, infirm, indigent or chronically ill. Religious or charitable homes for the aged, infirm, indigent or chronically ill. The religious homes in the first were private homes; that’s the difference.

Summer camps for children 18 years or under with developmental disabilities. And the last one is bed and breakfast homes. And that’s part of the state law.

MR. MCCAFFREY: Okay, my concern is, as an Airbnb participant I feel I should be paying the tax, because my guests provide additional burden on the Town. However, I guess I would be exempt as a – I have one room that I rent to one guest. It could be multiple people, but one party. And my understanding is this would not apply to my activity.

I live in the home at the time I have guests.

So, I’m in favor of this. I wish it
would cover my activity, as well.

THE MODERATOR: You can feel free to collect the tax and send it to Town Hall.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: We’ll cash the check.

MR. MCCAFFREY: [Laughs.] No, I like it because if it did apply, the nice thing about Airbnb is they’d take care of it all. I wouldn’t see it. The money wouldn’t go through me at all. Airbnb would collect it from the guest and send it to the Town. That’s what they’re doing in other municipalities.

So.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Peterson.

MS. PETERSON: Hi, Laura Peterson, Precinct 3.

I’m in support of this and the main reason is we just passed an article to look into The 300 Committee and the Town purchasing a very large parcel of land, which nobody asked but I wanted to ask but how much money does that take off of the tax rolls –

THE MODERATOR: It was about $14,000.

It was in the presentation.
MS. PETERSON: Okay, so when we do that type of thing, you know, I think it’s great. It’s what makes Falmouth a great community. But we need to put that money back. And, you know, I remember at one point Selectmen talking about parking meters on Main Street and that was going to be a big source of revenue for the Town. Well, all this does is level the playing field so that hotels and B&Bs that are already renting out their rooms are charged additional tax.

So now it’s just asking homeowners and then timeshares, too, I hope would be included in this, to pay a tax.

So, we want to have the open space, we want to be able to have these things for people who come to town and myself and my children, but we need to think of ways to fund. And all this does is level the playing field and it’s something we’re already doing so make it fair for everyone.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, I want to take a brief moment because I’ve heard this comment twice tonight about when a piece of land is
purchased by the Town that it’s taken off the tax rolls and therefore we lose the revenue.

For those of you that did attend the training this year and two years ago by Jen Petit, our Finance Director, for Town Meeting members on finance, that is not the case. We tax based on the levy capacity in the community. And when a piece of land is taken off of the tax roll, i.e. the Town would purchase land that was paying $14,000 in taxes, those $14,000 worth of levy capacity are redistributed across the community and reflected in the next year’s setting of the tax rate in the ability for us to levy on private property.

So, Ms. Petit, I don’t know if you want to explain that in a different way. But I want to make sure, because I’m hearing twice, now, that it’s just foregone revenue and that’s really not how this works, folks.

MS. PETIT: Yeah, we do not lose the revenue, it’s redistributed. And that’s basically what it is. We do not lose it.

THE MODERATOR: So the individual taxpayer no longer pays that tax bill, but that
$14,000 worth of property taxes are redistributed in the next year’s setting of what everyone pays in their property tax throughout the community.

So I just want to make sure folks know that. We’ve done two trainings on this, but it doesn’t seem to resonate yet.

Mr. Donald.

MR. DONALD: Malcolm Donald, Precinct 6.

I’m not in favor of this article at all. And I think we’re overlooking Falmouth residents who rent out their own homes to try to generate some income so that they can afford to still stay in their homes. And this is just another grab to get some more money here. I mean, why don’t we put a tax on breathing and that would be really - that would be a level playing field.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Moran.

MS. MORAN: I just want to give a little bit of a different perspective here. I’m in favor of this article, and there are a lot of communities on the Cape that are moving toward this possibility. For over ten years I ran the
Inn at West Falmouth. I also lived there with my family, my children. I handled every reservation. I probably fielded, I don’t know, say a hundred calls a year. In terms of the folks coming to rent in Falmouth for whatever time, a week, two weeks, it was not a deterrent at all that there be a tax involved.

So, in terms of ability to rent, what’s important, here, is the level playing field across all of the opportunities. And I will say that those funds — say, for example, you know, you buy a retirement home in Falmouth. You still live elsewhere; you plan to move in full time in about ten years. Lot of folks do it. While you are renting that property, week by week, two weeks by two weeks, there — you may be a couple that own that home. You may be renting to, you know, a bunch of college students. You may be renting to a family that has cousins visit. It’s a terrific way to make a living in Falmouth. It’s a great opportunity to share all of our resources and to have an income that can help us with the cost of living as homeowners.

However, there is a big — you know, it’s
funny to use the word tax, but it does tax our resources in Falmouth. It taxes our roads, it taxes our police and fire. It taxes -- every resource gets used because the population increases dramatically.

So, in addition to being about a level playing field and helping us sustain these wonderful resources, I think you should just consider how the funds could be used. Sarah Peake, for example, is talking about the possibility of these funds going to help the opioid crisis, which is a huge burden to this town right now. There could be a lot of ways that these funds could assist the municipality so that we could continue to provide the great services that we do on the even tax levy.

So I am in favor of this so that it does even the playing field and that we can have a source for replenishing our resources.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Stecher.

MR. STECHER: Bernie Stecher, Precinct 3.

First of all, I’d like to ask Town
Meeting members how many of you ask how much the
tax is when you rent a hotel room.

FROM THE FLOOR: No. I don’t.

MR. STECHER: I know I don’t. They
tell me it’s a hundred dollars a night. I check
out, they tell me it’s 120 because of the tax,
and I pay it. You expect to do that; that’s
what they all do.

I think this is a good law. I’m
especially upset at this point because for years
now people who own these timeshares don’t pay any
taxes, and those units are rented just like the
motels they were before and we lost all that
revenue. Let’s get it back.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. McGuire.

Mr. Dynan, you’re on the list.

MS. MCGUIRE: Thank you. Deborah
McGuire, Precinct one.

I have two questions. I’m wondering, is
there any projection of how much revenue this
will bring to the town? And my second question
is how will you police this. That’s –.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Suso.

MR. SUSO: We do not have an estimate
of revenue and we’re going to be guided by enabling legislation from the state legislature as far as collections. My suspicion is there’s going to be a guidance on the state level as to how this is going to occur, and cooperation and assistance from the state, through the leadership of our representatives, including Mr. Moderator.

And I know that many communities are going to work together on this. As Selectman Moran mentioned, communities throughout the Cape are working steadfastly on this and have been. So this is going to be, in all likelihood, a Commonwealth-wide solution that municipalities that embrace it are going to work together and follow the guidelines.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Ms. Moran.

MS. MORAN: Just a small addition to that. I don’t have a number. It’s a lot. However, the way it’s implemented is you file a return. So it’s just like any other way that a tax is collected, and with the same, you know –

MS. MCGUIRE: Annually?

MS. MORAN: No, you file it with every person coming. It’s part of the bill so you’ve
got billing records and then it’s online tax filing.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Putnam.

MS. PUTNAM: Rebecca Putnam, Precinct 9.

I’ll tell you, when I fly to Florida, I don’t care that I’m paying like 30 or 40 a night to stay in a hotel. It’s warm; it’s vacation. Most people don’t care.

So, I’m a numbers person and thank God for Google and cell phones. The Town of Falmouth’s rooms tax is four percent. So if you take a thousand dollar weekly rental at seven nights, that’s $40 a week. Times ten weeks is $400. Times 400 homes – how this is a major underestimation of how many homes are rented weekly in this town – it’s $160,000 a year.

Can this Town afford not to make $160,000 a year? Do we have infrastructure that couldn’t use that $160,000 a year? Do we have opioid prevention programs that couldn’t use $160,000 a year? Think about that.

Now, that’s only on a thousand a week. There are homes in this town that rent at $3500 a
week or a thousand a week. I’m in the business of real estate. I’m going to tell you: people are not going to stop coming here and they’re not going to stop renting their houses out per week.

So I ask that you vote for this article.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, anything anything new? Because we’re going to be about read to wrap up.

Mr. Murphy, anything new to this debate?

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

FROM THE FLOOR: [No mics: general complaint.]

MR. MURPHY: Thank you. [Laughs.] So nice to be welcomed.

[Laughter.]

MR. MURPHY: I keep hearing the issue of fairness and it seems like we think Falmouth is a bubble to itself. Okay, there’s no other town on the Upper Cape that’s proposing this tax. There’s three down Cape that are proposing it: Brewster, Truro, P-town. Right now, the tax is illegal in the state of Massachusetts for vacation rentals. We’re asking for an additional tax for our people, here.
So, in terms of fairness: no, it’s not.

It does have an affect. Okay?

Second, in terms of fairness: who here has stayed 90 days consecutively in a hotel? Who’s done that? It doesn’t happen. So that, it’s an unfair comparison to tax these single family homes for 90 day rentals when nobody is doing that in the hotel/motel business.

Okay, so this whole thing is written quite poorly.

And lastly, I love seeing my Chamber of Commerce dollars being used to oppose me.

Thank you.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Dynan.

MR. DYNAN: Bill Dynan, Precinct 5.

Just a follow-up question. We want to support fighting opium, Senior Center, all those great projects we want to do, but let’s not do it on the backs of the taxpayers of this town. And I mean all the taxpayers and the residents that pay real estate taxes.

I just have to say that it’s not a level playing field. There’s no enforcement in this
right now. I’m not in favor of passing something that has no teeth in it and there’s no way to, out of 7200 homes, if 3,000 are rented, how that’s going to be enforced? You’re going to tell them to fill out a form and send it in? Good luck to that.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Lowell.

MR. LOWELL: I apologize for speaking so late, but - Vicki Lowell, Precinct 1.

This is just a petition to the legislature and chances are that it’s going to come back in a different form, right? You know the -

THE MODERATOR: Well, you’ve tried it three times and the speaker won’t let it through the house, so.

MS. LOWELL: Yeah, so. But even if it came through, it could be different from what we’re petitioning, right?

THE MODERATOR: That’s correct, it could.

MS. LOWELL: Okay, so this is more like a placeholder, you could say, okay?
So, all this worrying about the details might be for naught.

THE MODERATOR: So, any changes in the language would have to be agreed to by the Selectmen when they petition the legislature. So, when we’re in the legislative process, if there’s a change in the petition language, we go back to the Selectmen and see if they agree to the change in the language. And that’s usually that dance that goes back and forth between the Town and the state when a home rule petition happens.

Okay, Ms. Wilson, anything new.

MS. WILSON: [No mic:] I’d just like to move the question.

THE MODERATOR: You’d like to move the question. We have a motion to move the previous question. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds and the previous question is moved.
The question will now come on the main motion as recommended. All those in favor of the main motion, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: It is the opinion of the chair that the ayes have it by a majority and the article passes.

Article 3. This is to authorize the Board of Selectmen and/or the Conservation Commission to transfer by sale or lease the Farley Bog property.

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, I have a new motion. I think we will have a slide on that; I’ll wait until the slide is up before I start reading.

The recommendation is that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to transfer by sale or lease to the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club, or a similarly purposed not for profit charitable corporation, property commonly known as the Farley Bog described as follows:
Land in Falmouth described in the Town’s deed dated April 29th, 1981, recorded in Barnstable County Registry of Deeds in Book 233292, page 22, depicted on Assessor’s Map 2006063000 and containing 12.5 acres more or less.

And further that transfer shall be subject to a conservation restriction conserving the property for open space and conservation purposes in accordance with Mass. General Laws Chapter 184, §§ 31-33, to be held and enforced by the Conservation Commission and upon such other terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Board of Selectmen deem appropriate.

And further that such transfer shall be contingent upon (a) the Board of Selectmen holding a hearing pursuant to the Town of Falmouth Code Chapter 207, (b) approval by the Massachusetts General Court of transfer property which is subject to the provisions of Article 97 of the amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and (c) compliance with any other legal requirement.

And further to authorize the Board of
Selectmen to petition the Massachusetts General Court for appropriate special legislation to permit the transfer in accordance with the provisions of Article 97 of the amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or do or take any other action in this matter.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, that’s the main motion. Discussion on the main motion?

Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Gary Anderson from Precinct 7.

Mr. Moderator, I would like to point out a scribe’s error on the Article 3, the third line. It’s says 14.5 acres. That’s in conflict with the motion. It should be 12.5 acres.

12.5.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, and 12.5 is in the new motion, so we’re all set.

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

MR. ANDERSON: I may need an extra minute. I can’t talk quite as fast as our moderator does at the outset. If I did, I could
do this in about five minutes. May I have an extra minute?

THE MODERATOR: Sure. Yeah, you have ten minutes for an opening presentation, so.

MR. ANDERSON: Okay.

THE MODERATOR: You want 11 minutes?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: An additional minute.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds; you have 11 minutes.

MR. ANDERSON: I should have asked for $200,000.

[Laughter.]

MR. ANDERSON: It’s great to be in front of you again, although it’s for a different reason. About eight years ago at Fall Town Meeting I stood before you as Chairman of the Finance Committee and presented an assessment of our Town’s Fiscal Year 2009 difficult financial picture. Apparently our local Enterprise
columnist, Troy Clarkson, thought it was a bit like Chicken Little, and suggested that I might try to be more jovial regarding our financial future.

So, at the 2010 Spring Town Meeting, I showed a slide I called The Jovial Meter, which had a range from gloom and doom to almost smiling. Tonight, on Article 3, I hope to peg the needle on that Jovial Meter to the huge smile side. Not on finances, but on a great conservation project.

I don’t have a clicker. Can you just – oh, there is one here.

Let’s see if I can do this. There it is.

I’m the Treasurer of the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club and president of Sporting Safety Conservation and Education Fund of Falmouth, which is an IRS approved charitable non-profit organization. We abbreviate it to SSCEFF, and it is the charitable foundation of the Rod and Gun Club. We’ve handed out a fact sheet describing the two organizations and the project proposed in the article.
Tonight I’m asking you to vote yes on Article 3. Over the next few minutes I will briefly explain the proposal we’ve presented to the Conservation Commission and the Board of Selectmen to rehabilitate and restore two key environmental assets in the Town of Falmouth.

The first part of our proposal is to create a cold water fishery to foster the return of native fish to the Upper Childs River, and second, we are proposing a restoration of the Farley Bog to wetlands.

This map is a high level view of the proposed project location. It’s no surprise that many people have no idea where the Farley Bog is. To orient you, this is Route 28. And right about here is Carriage Shop Road; it goes up and there’s a little causeway here and the Rod and Gun Club is just north of Carriage Shop Road there.

If you go across the river, this is Childs River, here. And go about a half mile north, you have the Farley Bog.

There’s a little dirt road that goes up to the Farley Bog; that’s how you access it.
That road is owned and maintained by the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club.

The Farley Bog is about a 14 ¼ acre property, but the Mashpee Town Line runs right through the northern tip. That’s about two acres. The Town of Falmouth owns the southern 12 ½ acre portion.

If you continue on this road, you will come up to the Gardner bogs, which are in Mashpee, and the road continues up to Old Barnstable Road.

The Childs River flows through the middle of the Gardner bogs, down through the Farley bog, and continues under Carriage Shop Road. It then goes under Barrows Road and under Route 28 and eventually out to Vineyard Sound.

Herring and Brook Trout and other fish used to traverse the Childs River to spawn. Today, not so much. The river’s too warm and too shallow.

A minute ago, I mentioned that many people don’t know where the Farley bog is. One of the main reasons is that the Farley Bog is completely surrounded by land owned by the Rod
and Gun Club. The parcels shown here in white and the grey parcels are in Mashpee. These are in Falmouth and they’re owned by the Rod and Gun Club. Grey parcels are owned by the Rod and Gun Club. The Club has recorded conservation restrictions on all of these parcels so they will never be developed.

Previously the Farley Bog and the Gardner bogs were farmed for cranberries. A few years ago, the last cranberry farmer notified the Boards of Selectmen of Falmouth and Mashpee that he was abandoning his leases on the bogs because farming on these bogs was not economical for him. The Boards of Selectmen have turned over these abandoned bogs to the Town Conservation Commissions for administration.

Here’s a map -- I don’t know if you can see it too well – of the Farley Bog, and it shows the Childs River going right down through the middle of it. There’s a road that goes around the Farley Bog and there’s a pond on the north end.

Here’s our proposal: the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club, in conjunction with local, state
and federal partners, would undertake the realignment of a portion of the Upper Childs River to create a cold water fishery. We would also move forward with a restoration of the Farley Bog back to a natural wetland habitat for waterfowl and other birds and mammals.

Here’s a drawing of what the Farley Bog might look like upon completion of this project. Now, please bear in mind that this drawing is not to scale. We propose re-routing the Childs River from the middle of the Farley Bog to the west side of the bog. Now, this looks like it’s a straight line, but actually the river would be meandering as we look at it there.

On the west side of the bog, right along here, this is a very steeply sloping wooded bank, hillside, and that would provide shade for the re-routed river that would lower its temperature. The green line represents an embankment we would construct all along the east side of the meandering river; it would be about three to four feet height, sloping down to the bog for 15 to 20 feet. We would plant this embankment with trees, bushes and grasses, creating a corridor of
native vegetation. This would provide additional shade to help cool the river from the east side and protect the river from sediment runoff.

We would alter the footprint of this little pond on the north and create a new pond on the south end. The road encircling the bog on the north, west, and south sides would be removed and planted with native species to discourage dirt bikes and four wheelers which are currently a big problem at the bog.

We would construct two foot bridges, one on the north and one on the south, to cross the Child’s River for hikers. The rest of the bog would be restored with native vegetation and trees.

The Rod and Gun Club has always allowed and would continue to allow the public access to its 186 acres of land for hiking and interaction with nature. This project, while enhancing those recreational activities, would also create educational opportunities for school field trips and scouts to observe nature and learn about the process of restoring a wetland to its natural
A final benefit to the Town of Falmouth would be to shift the responsibility and the expense for administering an abandoned bog to two organizations which have land and water conservation as core elements of their mission.

This slide shows two scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey dragging a ground penetrating radar sled - I don't know if you can see it, there - connected to a GPS unit - that's that little white disk. They're dragging it across the Farley Bog. And this technology allowed them to create a topographical map of the Farley Bog. And this is what that topographical map that was created by that ground penetrating radar sled looks like. It shows the depth where a hard sand bottom lies. If you see these little circles that go from the top left to the bottom right, it shows where the sled was pulled across the bog. The sled was set to record depths up to 14 feet.

As you can see, there are no circles in the middle of the bog. That indicates that a hard bottom in the middle is at least 15 to 20
feet down.

Now, each of these concentric lines that you see here as you head toward the middle of the bog indicates about a two foot increase in depth to hard sand bottom. Generally the soil composition above that sand bottom consists of peat. A critical discovery from these ground penetrating radar results shows that the bog, which is an ancient glacial kettle pond, could support the weight of an embankment on the west side.

Why is all this important? A recent experience elsewhere on the Cape of building a berm on top of peat had the unfortunate result of the berm disappearing. It sank into the bog, causing the river bottom to actually rise up and flood the bog.

A key consideration of this proposal is the control of and responsibility for the Farley Bog parcel. This project will require a substantial investment, as well as significant hours of volunteer labor by the Rod and Gun Club and SSCEFF members.

On February 22nd, the Conservation
Commission voted unanimously to declare the 12 ½ acre Farley Bog parcel surplus to its needs and to make the fee interest available to transfer subject to certain conditions. The Board of Selectmen has put a positive motion on the floor for Article 3. The Club is very interested in acquiring the parcel for this significant conservation project.

The Rod and Gun Club will agree to the conditions imposed by the Con Com’s recommendations, including putting a conservation restriction on the entire property. As indicated earlier, the Club has done this with all the abutting acreage that surrounds the Farley Bog. We’ve requested of the Concom board that this conservation restriction be held by them. This would ensure that the Farley Bog would be preserved in perpetuity in a natural state.

This project has been presented to several state, federal and local conservation groups and we’ve received their unanimous endorsement. We’ve discussed this with State Representative David Vieira to prepare
legislation to facilitate the transfer of this
Article 97 land, which requires a two-thirds vote
of the Massachusetts House and Senate.

We respectfully request that the Town
Meeting vote yes on Article 3.

Thank you for consideration of our
proposal.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Article 3.

Discussion on Article 3.

Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: Mr. Moderator, fellow
Town Meeting members, I’d like to thank my former
Chairman of the Finance Committee and my
Treasurer of the Rod and Gun Club. As a 55 year
member of the Rod and Gun Club, we have been very
cautious stewards of open space that we are
currently under our jurisdiction.

I would ask this body to vote this
article. It would be a win-win situation for
the environmentally sensitive area that has been
abandoned as a bog, and it will create a fish
area for what we all like to have every Friday,
Saturday, or whatever days that you like to have
fish.
[Laughter.]

MR. DUFRESNE: I can’t think of anything more to add to what Gary has just proposed. I think he outlined it perfectly. I don’t think he left anything unsaid that does not justify the passage of this article. And hopefully the Town won’t charge us too much for it.

But, anyway, I would like to see a positive vote on this article. I think it would— we have been— and I’ve been a member for, again, 55 years— good stewards of the open land under our jurisdiction.

Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Joe Netto, Precinct 9 and also a member of the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club, though not quite as long as Mr. Dufresne has been.

But, I would hope you would obviously support this article because I think you have to also be aware that, parallel with what the Conservation Commission has outlined for the Coonamessett River, if you look at the two
projects, they’re hand in hand. The only
difference is the Falmouth Rod and Gun Club is
going to bear the full fiscal responsibility of
doing this and bringing this goal to achievement
if you vote to let us purchase this land.

I would also like to give you some
anecdotal history on this project. When my
father was president of the Rod and Gun in the
‘60's, the Club tried to bring back the fisheries
and got Mass. Wildlife. We dug out the pond and
we planted it – seeded it, excuse me, stocked it
with trout. But it failed. And when the state
came back and the fish didn’t survive, it was
because the water was too warm.

So, with the plan that’s been developed
for the Club, as Gary brought out, bringing it to
a cold water fishery because fish don’t like warm
water.

So, again, I would hope you would
support this. And it’s a parallel project with
what’s going on in the Coonamessett River.

Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Latimer.

MR. LATIMER: Hi, I’m Rich Latimer,
Precinct 1. And I’m also—I’m no longer a member of the Rod and Gun Club, but I still am a member of Trout, Unlimited. I am an addict, fly-fishing addict.

And I want to speak in favor of this and I also want to point out how this could have, if we’re successful with this project and the Coonamessett project, significant addition to our tourist industry. I spent time with my wife’s sister and her husband down in Maryland, down in Bethesda, and we, the brother-in-law and I, always take an annual trip up to Carlyle, Pennsylvania. Which the only real industry that they have there is trout fishing, fly fishing. They have an Orvis shop there, this little town that isn’t even a fraction of the size of Falmouth, and people like us, thousands of them every year, go to this little village and they spend a lot of money.

These two projects—this one and the Coonamessett project—would increase our tourist base. Not just the summer, but we go up there in April and they continue throughout the year, well into late fall.
So I think this isn’t just a nice conservation effort, I think it’s also something that could contribute significantly to our tourist industry and I would recommend that we go thumbs up on this.

FROM THE FLOOR: Question.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Shearer. Yeah, we’re – okay, call the question? Anything new?

The question will come on the main motion. This is a two-thirds majority because of the property interest. All those in favor of the main motion as presented, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous.

[Applause.]

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: At this point the Chair would entertain a motion to dissolve the Special Town Meeting. So moved.
All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it and the Special Town Meeting is dissolved.

All Town Meeting members please rise for the establishment of the quorum for the Annual Town Meeting and the tellers will return a count.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: In the first division, Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: 44.

THE MODERATOR: 44.

THE MODERATOR: The third division, Ms. Schneider?

DR. SCHNEIDER: 61.

THE MODERATOR: 61.

MS. CUNY: 89.

THE MODERATOR: Second division, 89.

People lost power, they decided to come to Town Meeting. By a counted vote of 194, we have a quorum and the Annual Town Meeting is in
session.

Article 14, Mr. Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the main motion.

MR. FINNERAN: Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, point of order?

MR. FINNERAN: No, I would ask this body to entertain a motion to reconsider Article 13 of last evening.

THE MODERATOR: Article 13; this was the Conservation Commission article?

MR. FINNERAN: Yes, sir.

THE MODERATOR: All right, what new information do we have?

MR. FINNERAN: Substantial new information, if you consider upwards to a half million dollars with the potential for more to be a substantial amount.

THE MODERATOR: I’m just going to take a call for reconsideration on Article 13.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[AYE.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]
THE MODERATOR: It’s the opinion of the chair is that the nos have it by a majority.

MR. FINNERAN: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Article 14, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, our recommendation is indefinite postponement.

THE MODERATOR: This is to authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court relative to land up in North Falmouth. The recommendation is now indefinite postponement.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous.

Article 15, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN JONES: Mr. Moderator, the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen is indefinite postponement.
THE MODERATOR: Indefinite postponement. This was to authorize the Board of Selectmen to purchase or take by eminent domain land along the Coonamessett River Restoration Project.

Is there any need for a positive motion on this article? Hearing none, the question will come on the main motion as indefinite postponement.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous.

Article 16. Madame Chairman.

CHAIRMAN VOGEL: If I could have your attention on the recommendation on Article 16. There was a typographical or clerical error in compiling the list of positions. In the first page of positions, there’s a line that says Delete Sailing Instructor and Add Sailing Instructor. That was placed there erroneously
and we just want to remove that from the recommendation.

So the recommendation will now read that the Town vote Article 16 as printed with the addition of Wastewater II, minimum hourly wage of $18.74 and maximum of $23.91. And change election warden to $12.34. And delete the Grade 3 sailing instructor.

Mr. Moderator, I move Article 16 as corrected.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, so we have the main motion there and we made the correction to the Sailing Instructor section and then we have a presentation for Article 16.

MR. SUSO: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Julian Suso, Falmouth Town Manager.

The first item at the top of the list on proposed Article 16 relates to the request to Town Meeting to place the position of Community Development Director in the Town’s salary and wage ordinance. Hopefully, Town Meeting members will recognize this as we discussed it at some length and we appreciate your deliberation last November when this proposal originally came
before you. It also arose in each of the last two five year strategic plans, discussed and adopted by the Board of Selectmen. It included the proposed creation of this position and a community development organization structure.

Why change the organizational structure?

To improve the coordination, communication and effectiveness of the departments involved in land use planning, regulation and permitting. To improve the ability of the Town Manager to focus on strategic priorities of the Board of Selectmen by reducing the number of direct reports, consistent with the departmental structure already created for the Department of Public Works, Marine and Environmental Services, Finance Department, and Community Services.

There would be absolutely no change to the roles of the existing department heads or the existing boards or commissions. Unaffected as to their roles whatsoever.

This, a brief organization chart, proposed to the Board of Selectmen and affirmed by them. You can see the position of Community Development Director. As proposed, these eight
positions would be direct reports to the Community Development Director: Town Planner; Health Agent; Conservation Administrator; CPA Fund Administrator, a position in the next article proposed to be created; Building Commissioner; Zoning Administrator; Housing Coordinator and principal office assistant. With the exception of the CPA Fund Administrator, those are all existing positions. No additional positions are proposed to be created other than the Community Development Director.

I also want to remind Town Meeting members: last November, when this was first presented to you, it had two parts. Part one was the creation of the Community Development Director position and Town Meeting determined to defer action on that, and we advised you of course that we would be bringing this back to you for your - respectfully for your consideration at this time in Spring Town Meeting.

But the second part of that proposal was the deletion of an existing staff position, which was the Assistant Superintendent of Wastewater. The reason that that was brought to you is in the
spirit that would eliminate from the budget a little bit over half of the total cost, the maximum total cost proposed for the position of Community Development Director. So that the net impact on the FY '18 budget would be reduced by over 50 percent.

You did approve the deletion of that position, so I want to affirm and just remind you that in the FY '18 budget, which we’ll be looking at as part of Article 18, this position is included, as you know, the Community Development Director, but it also includes the deletion of the Assistant Wastewater Superintendent. So the proposed maximum impact of a little over $100,000 is reduced by over $50,000 in a net impact in the budget because the other position to which I referred has been deleted from the budget. And I wanted to remind you of that.

The Town Manager how has 18 direct reports, as noted in this chart. I won’t go through all the names of the direct reports in the interest of time, but be assured that those are direct reports now reporting to me as Town Manager. The proposed creation of this new
position would reduce the number of direct reports from 18 to 12.

This is a selected number of municipalities. There are others in the Commonwealth, but these are among a number that already have a Community Development Department, a Community Development organization. As you will note, some are from the Cape, some are off-Cape. Some vary in size: they’re smaller than Falmouth; some are larger than Falmouth; some are very close in population to Falmouth. There is some minor variation in the exact functions under the Community Development organization, but they all have in common that they have a Community Development Department and organization. And, again, those with experience in the Commonwealth recognize that this is a reasonably common structure in many other municipalities.

Why create the Community Development Director position? A supervisor of this position would be a supervisor focused on coordinating and supporting permitting and planning staff to improve communication systems and customer service. The Community Development Director
would not just be a manager. The Director will be directly engaged in professional planning work. Very important. There’s insufficient professional staff currently to keep pace with the regulatory functions and the future-oriented planning such as economic development and the very critical function of coastal resiliency that we’ve talked about at some length.

And now, Selectman Sam Patterson will continue with his presentation.

MR. PATTERSON: I doubt if there are many of you that know that I actually have a Masters Degree in Organization Management earned from Johns Hopkins University. And it’s a, you know, you would think it’s an ivory tower kind of situation, but I can assure you that my instructors actually were mostly CEO’s and presidents from corporations as large as 2,000 down to 100.

I’ve worked in corporations as large as 2,000 and I’ve worked with small companies as small as 100. So I have some experience in management. I’ve been an engineer, a grunt engineer, so to speak; a lead engineer, a project
manager, a program manager and I’ve actually
managed, at Benthos, a team of 16 engineers. So
I have hands-on experience; I’ve walked the walk
in terms of being an effective manager, and I’ve
observed how organizations are managed.

So, I bring that background to the role
of Selectman.

While serving as an engineering manager,
I helped Benthos earn the 9001 Certification by
the International Standards Organization for
being a quality management organization. It was
a two year process that improved the quality of
its products and services, its productivity and
its profitability. At the heart of this
process was getting every member of the company
to commit to continuous improvement of their work
and how the company does business as a whole.

This is the model that some of the academic
professors from Harvard and Yale and Princeton
took to the Japanese back in the late 40's and
50's, which was a --

FROM THE FLOOR: Speak directly into
the mic, please.

MR. PATTERSON: Okay, sure.
Which was adopted by the Japanese and became the basis for corporations like Sony and Toyota and Honda. And transformed the way they did business so that they were very profitable but they also turned out much more consistent, high quality products and services for the benefit of their customers.

So, that’s what I was trained with, and that’s what Benthos adopted, and got quite a transformation of their culture as a result of that.

So I brought that experience here as a selectman. And, like the many Falmouth citizens who had brought issues to me on how we could improve the quality of the town’s services and work, I share their commitment for continuous improvement. I actually managed to get it into the mission statement of our School Department; it’s still there, I believe. And it was a way of saying, you know, as professionals, we should always be striving to continue to improve our work and the services that we provide to people.

The three areas that most deserve - that most stood out for me in terms of the Town’s side
were a lack of mutual respect that led to poor communications between staff and citizens, between Town departments and between Town staff and contractors and developers. I’ve heard this from many, many sources. It’s not just a single survey point. A lack of attention to the Town’s future economic vitality and a shortage of managerial leadership. And that’s not to disparage Julian’s efforts, because what was soon obvious to me was that the Town Managers were too overloaded with management, managing day to day internal and external communications. I know I go into his office at least every two weeks with a list of six issues that have come up as a result of my committee work or talking with citizens. And that’s a plan for a half hour visit and the next thing you know we’re in there for an hour because Julian is bouncing other issues that he’s come across over me.

That takes time. And Julian is impressive in the fact that he keeps a running to-do list and he gets those things done. He actually pays attention to them and follows up on them. That’s not something that you see in all
managers. So my kudos to him for the thoroughness with which he follows up on items. But they also have to worry --

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Patterson, we’re at the time. So do you want to request an additional amount of time?

MR. SUSO: If we might, Mr. Moderator, request another --

MR. PATTERSON: Three minutes, tops.

MR. SUSO: - three minutes, sir?

THE MODERATOR: Three minutes. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[*Aye.*]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Go ahead.

MR. PATTERSON: Yes? I’ll continue.

All right.

And the other thing was that there are other issues that constantly come up and then there’s the challenge of supervising staff,
conflict issues and staff issues. And then, in addition to that, worrying about long-term challenges of economic vitality and community development, which are the long term, future things that will be impacting the Town and which we need to be aware of.

And then there’s the challenges of keeping up with the changing – excuse me? I’m trying to get this to go forward. Can you advance it to the slide that I was going to present? Oh, there we go. Well, that’s sufficient.

What I wanted to mention is just the complexity of managing a 300 person organization, because that’s what this Town’s staff represents.

FROM THE FLOOR: Microphone.

MR. PATTERSON: Sorry.

A 300 person organization is not like steering a ship. You’ve got 300 degrees of freedom going off in different direction, which requires supervision and guidance, setting missions. I have them listed here: aligning Town services with changing state and federal laws and regulations, which your staff doesn’t
necessarily track. Providing required education and training. Motivating everyone to take responsibility for the quality of Town services and work. Coordinating the collective response of multiple departments.

There is a true need for management leadership in order to accomplish all this. To communicate examples of expected quality behavior and work, to support and reward quality work by staff, to evaluate staff behavior or work and provide constructive feedback. To create an interactive environment of mutual respect, teamwork and professionalism. To generate the personal interactions needed to maintain broad quality services.

I would just want to say that, notice there’s nothing about cleaning house. I went into Benthos and one of my nervous draftsmen came up to me and said, “Look, I heard you were brought in to clean house. And I’m worried about my job. I need to have a job to support my family.” I said, “No, that’s not why I’m here. I’m here to actually help this department work better, deliver quality products, and be
responsive.” And that’s how it all turned out.
Nobody had to be fired and we all came out.
And, as I said, we actually achieved a higher
level of quality service. Not just with the
Engineering Department but with the entire
company as a result of that kind of supervision
of constructive feedback and evaluations.

What I want to stress, though, is that
it takes the investment of time. It’s not
something that happens automatically. We cannot
assume that every person is striving for the same
end goals within an organization of 300. We all
have personal issues that come into our lives.
We all have to make an interpretation of what’s
in the best interests of the organization. And
that sort of thing takes coordination and
feedback and essentially confirmation that what
employees are doing is what’s in the best
interest of the organization.

And I think that’s why we need this
extra person in that position for the short term
management supervision of personnel. They’re
going to be a manager of managers, so it’s a
matter of managing the managers to do that sort
of thing, with the constituents --

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

MR. PATTERSON: - below them, and also

for that long-term --

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

MR. PATTERSON: - economic development

and community development.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah.

MR. PATTERSON: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Gotcha.

Discussion. Yeah, in the back. Mr. Alphonso.

MR. ALPHONSO: Phil Alphonso, Precinct 9.

Mr. Moderator, I would like to make an amendment to remove the Community Development Director from the article.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, motion to remove the Community Development Director from the main motion. Discussion on the amendment.

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: Well, let’s let the --

MR. ALPHONSO: Okay, so --

THE MODERATOR: - one that made the
motion first. Then I’ll put you on the list.

MR. ALPHONSO: So now I have four minutes?

THE MODERATOR: Yes.

MR. ALPHONSO: Beautiful. Since last year – I’m also a member of the Recreation Committee – we have not had a Recreation Director. We’ve had Joe Olnick – who’s amazing – do double the work. We’ve had maybe one person working inside that building after five o’clock.

Our police force subcontracts out the Sheriff’s Department. That’s not a bad thing. I know most of those guys and they’re really great people. We could hire our own police force, though. Chief Dunne should have the authority to hire a full staff, not just a summer staff.

Our DPW is beyond shorthanded. We have one working DPW employee for all of the activity fields in the Town of Falmouth. And a recent study just put out by Gale Associates, all of our fields are overused, under maintained. The study calls for nine new fields of grass or three turf fields.
Ladies and gentlemen, I ask this position to not be passed through.

I personally feel that, Mr. Suso, you-you do do a good job and I respect you. The problem that I’m having here is you just got a raise and a contract extension; I think a lot of these duties should come directly from you. And I don’t know if it’s a personality issue or a personality conflict with the people that are under you. We have a lot of Indians that don’t need more chiefs. The Indians we have are very short-handed.

So, ladies and gentlemen, please, I ask that that is taken away from the article.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer, on the amendment.

MR. LATIMER: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Richard Latimer, Precinct 1.

I’m going to speak in support of this amendment. I fully agree with all the reasons stated by the gentleman in terms of the need for more Indians and fewer chiefs – excuse the lack of political correctness here.
I would like to point out that this came up last fall and was tried to be just pushed right through. And somebody stood up and said, “Well, what’s the job description for this position?” They wanted to create this position and—reluctantly the job description was put up and it was put up for a short while. And the thing that struck me most was first of all the top line of the job description was: “regulatory and supervisory authority”. In this one person. And then we went down to the lower and it said, “regulatory and supervisory authority over what?”, and it said the Planning Board, the Zoning Board, the Con Com, all of the agencies. And we saw this in the flow chart that the—or the organizational chart that Mr. Suso put up with this Director of Development at the top and everybody else reporting up.

And we saw him also comment that, well, this is going to be not just a managerial position, but a hands on, professional position. So, essentially what he’s talking about is somebody who is going to stand in and take supervisory authority over the Town Planner, the
Zoning Administrator, and not simply — excuse me.

I’m talking.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Mr. Clark?

MR. CLARK: [No mic:] Point of order.

THE MODERATOR: What’s the point of order?

MR. CLARK: [No mic:] Are we discussing whether we should separate this position from the others or whether it has merit in and of itself?

MR. LATIMER: Whether it has merit to delete it. To delete it.

THE MODERATOR: So, the amendment is to delete it from --

MR. LATIMER: To delete it from this article. It’s an amendment.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, to delete it from the motion.

MR. LATIMER: This person will have — report not to the people, like right now the Planning Board does, or even the Zoning Board does. It will report, in terms of supervision and professional regulatory control, to this new economic — or this new Director of Development.

It is a massive change in the way this Town
operates. And it is centralizing all authority
over the development of the Town not simply in
this Director of Development but going right up
to Mr. Suso.

As I said before, it is a naked power
grab. It is taking power away from the people
who currently manage the planning of our Town,
the zoning, who do it through the traditional way
that we have all learned to accept, which is on a
democratic, not autocratic basis. That is what
we are doing.

Now, we hear Mr. Patterson talking
about, well, this is how we do it in the
corporate world. Well, I’m going to remind
everybody: we are not a business corporation;
we’re a community. We do not need to have lines
of authority that go up to our Town Manager.
What we need is to spread out that authority.
Which is what we have now. Which is what this
proposal will take away.

Mr. Suso put up a list of several towns
that have done this. He – this is the kind of
thing – he omitted the Town of Carver, which
recently created a similar position. It was
going to be the Director of Economic Development, and you will note that Mr. Suso did refer to this person will have authority for economic development. And, you know, one of the first things the Carver Director of Economic Development did was, well, he had some vacant land that was under-utilized and said, “Well, this would be a --

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer.

MR. LATIMER: great place for an industrial park --

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer, we’re at four minutes.

MR. LATIMER: Excuse me?

THE MODERATOR: You’re at four minutes. The time’s expired at four minutes.

MR. LATIMER: Just one -- one --

THE MODERATOR: Your time’s expired at four minutes. I can put you back on the list, if you like.

MR. LATIMER: Well, that person --

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Finneran.

MR. LATIMER: put in a plan to take people’s property --
MR. LATIMER: – for this industrial park.

MR. FINNERAN: I don’t question anything that Mr. Alphonso said except for perhaps that his approach is wrong. Wouldn’t it be proper for us to either split or divide this question, just as we did last year in Town Meeting when it was mixed with the Housing Coordinator? If you can look in Article 16, you see that --

THE MODERATOR: It’s a two page laundry list. So, if you want to get rid of this position, let’s vote yes on this amendment and then we can go through the other ones and decide if you want to keep ‘em or move ‘em.

MR. FINNERAN: Well, wouldn’t this be better to be taken stand alone and rather than --

THE MODERATOR: That’s going to be your amendment; you vote yes or no on the amendment. This – this isn’t difficult. You either want it; you vote yes. You don’t want it; you vote no. I mean, this isn’t rocket science.
MR. FINNERAN: Well, you can split it and --

THE MODERATOR: This is how the motion will go: you vote yes if you want it, no if you don’t.

MR. FINNERAN: Okay. And then we can have a new amendment, to split it or divide it?

FROM THE FLOOR: No, no.

THE MODERATOR: You keep it up, we’ll take the vote right now, like we did last night.

Mr. Anderson, you’re next.

You want this position, you vote yes. You don’t want the position, you vote no.

That’s as simple as I can make it for you all, okay? I can’t make it any simpler than that.

Yes if you want it; no if you don’t.

Mr. Anderson.

FROM THE FLOOR: No. No, if want it.

Yes if you don’t.

MR. ANDERSON: Gary Anderson from Precinct 7.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah. You’re going to – the amendment is to remove it.

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes.
THE MODERATOR: That’s correct. So, if you vote to remove it, that means you do not want the position in the Town’s Classification Plan. If you vote to remove this position from this list, you will not have a Community Development Director in Falmouth. Okay. That’s the amendment, is to remove this position from the list.

Okay. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Gary Anderson, Precinct 7. I’m opposed to the amendment. We’re going to be voting on $128 million budget, and that’s a substantial sum. I used to run a hundred million dollar company about 15 years ago. Many management consultants will suggest to you that the optimum span of control, in other words the number of direct reports for a high level manager, is anywheres from six to nine.

When I was on the Finance Committee back in 2005 or 2006, I counted the direct reports to the Town Manager at that time; they numbered close to 26. I applaud Mr. Suso for getting it down to 18. This will get it down to 12. I
think it makes sense to oppose this amendment because we do have a very substantial - it may not be a corporation, but it is a substantial amount of money that needs some attention and I think that we should vote this amendment down.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, Brent Putnam, Precinct 9. Again, as well, I’m in opposition of this amendment.

When I was a Selectman, one of the first things we saw, as Mr. Anderson just noted, was that Mr. Whritenour, our previous Town Manager, had a span of control that was far too broad for him to do an adequate job. And when Mr. Whritenour left, one of the first things we did with Mr. Suso as a board, we tasked him with reducing the span of control.

I - as with Mr. Anderson, I manage folks myself. I actually have a team of 11 now that I manage, which is a little on the large side. If you’ve ever managed people, you know that one difficult person can take all of your time away from all of the other folks. And it’s very
difficult when you’re managing more than half a
dozent or eight or nine people, as Mr. Anderson
noted.

It sounds like an Indians versus Chiefs
thing – and forgive the analogy, but the reality
is is that when you manage an organization, you
need to have time to do your own work in addition
to overseeing the people that work under you.
And when you have a dozen, or two dozen people,
as it used to be, that you’re trying to manage,
you don’t have time to do your own job.

This is a small step. We already took
the step of making room in the budget by removing
the Assistant Wastewater Superintendent.

So it’s really a no brainer, folks.
Let’s drop the amendment. Let’s move forward
with the position and, as Mr. Anderson noted,
let’s get on to the big stuff.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR:   Ms. Kannelopoulos.

MS. KANNELOPOULOS:   [No mic:] I quite

agree with --

THE MODERATOR:   With a microphone,

please.
FROM THE FLOOR: Use the microphone.

MS. KANNELOPOULOS: I quite agree with what Mr. Putnam has said and with what Sam Patterson has said, too. If there’s so much grumbling in town about Town government, this is a wonderful opportunity to see if we can improve things. And it would be tragic to give up such a good opportunity.

We can always make an assessment later.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: Fellow Town Meeting members, Mr. Moderator. Last night I held this article. I held it because everything that was said by Mr. Suso was not available in what I was reading.

Do we need another $100,000 a year position in Town Hall? It takes almost a million dollars to pay for the corner office, the people involved in the super management of the Town of Falmouth, which has a 300 year plus history. All of a sudden now they can’t handle what I interpreted are the people in Town Hall not professional enough without having somebody
coordinate their efforts.

Now, I think - I’ve been walking in and out of Town Hall since it was built. I find that we have some very professional help in Town Hall. Do we need another, again, repeat, another $100,000 a year position unless we want him to oversee these people up here on the - on the stand?

It just - it boggles my mind and I held it - I didn’t want to interfere with the following portion of this article because I think all of these employees deserve the money that they’re going to get. But we do not need another $100,000 a year position.

I want you people to consider very carefully the people that you deal with when you go into Town Hall now; do they need a coordinator to help them get their job done? I don’t think so. And if you people think so, you go right ahead and vote this position.

But I just have a hard time understanding why, after some discussion at last Town Meeting - which unfortunately is the first one I missed in 45 years. I missed this article.
And I understand that it didn’t pass. And if it
didn’t pass then, it shouldn’t pass now.

It’s a waste of an employment position.

Now, we’ve consolidated other positions.

We’ve eliminated positions. We have a shortage
in DPW, Police Department, Fire Department, every
other agency within the Town of Falmouth that makes
up the core operation of the Town of Falmouth. But
now we need somebody to oversee what has been
going on? I don’t think so.

I would say vote this position out.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Mr. Moderator, before you
start the clock -

THE MODERATOR: I’ve already started
it, so hurry.

[Laughter.]

MR. NETTO: Well – and I’m sorry. We
also have a presentation by a group that’s
opposed to an article. And we didn’t know what
to be opposed to, no offense, because there’s
nothing in this book.

Now, I’ll be quick as I can, but I’ll
take more than four minutes. And I went out and
got some facts and I got some figures that would support, I feel, for public safety and for the benefit of the taxpayers of the Town of Falmouth, but it’s just going to take — and I will be as fast as I can.

But, four minutes, I’ll walk out of here now and that’s it. No offense. Because I think we did not have —

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Netto, I can’t change the rule on the floor of Town Meeting, you know that.

MR. NETTO: Well, we didn’t know what — we —

THE MODERATOR: So use your four minutes wisely, please.

MR. NETTO: Yeah, okay. We had — I’ll be very quick, folks.

There was nothing in your warrant book and what you saw today on that screen. So we had no idea, I had no idea because it wasn’t in the book that was mailed to me. What a tremendous lack of communication we have with Town Meeting. No, seriously. That’s number one.
Let me get to the facts, please. And I will be quick. Just, it bothered me last time that we defeated this and it’s brought up again and we weren’t told – didn’t know what the position encompassed. Not in our warrant books.

I went to the Fire and Police chiefs. I went to positions that have been understaffed. And I’m not an advocate – I’m not here saying we gotta hire this many firemen and that many policemen. Let me just give you some figures. In the Fire Department we have ten man minimum. Right now there are ten firefighters in five stations. The population tonight is 31,000; again, this summer, it’s going to go up to 100,000.

In the administrator’s written explanation of the budget we did have a mention of two additional firefighters, and two wastewater personnel. In the Fire Department last year we had 29,776 calls. That came out –

[Pause.]

MR. NETTO: Oh, I’m just so sorry for this. [Laughs.] They came out – I’m sorry. Because when you get thrown a curve ball in Town
government, when you’re prepared for one and you
find out you have something else, things don’t go
as you wanted them to.

We have not increased the Fire
Department in years.

I’d like to speak a little bit more
about the Police Department because it’s really
amazing. In 2008, we had 66 patrolmen. When
hard times came financially in 2010, that was
reduced to 58. This budget today budgets 58
officers. Yet we’ve added wastewater
personnel, we’re adding a Community Service
Director tonight, and there’s no mention in the
administrator’s explanation of the budget of any
police.

When I got the figures from the Fire
Chief on the runs just for this year, he came to
see me and he said, “Mr. Netto, before we talk.
I gave you that figure; add ten more. Between
two o’clock and seven o’clock tonight, the Fire
Department had ten more calls.”

So, when we are an area with those
numbers of such a great need, I have to support –
I was just going to ask you not to vote the money
for this position. I think it’ll deliver a message to the Board of Selectmen: I want what best protects, what best works for the taxpayer/citizens of the Town of Falmouth -

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: – which gives the people of East Falmouth, Woods Hole and North Falmouth –

THE MODERATOR: [Inaudible.]

MR. NETTO: – public safety. Thank you very much.

The playing field --

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Clark.

MR. NETTO: -- I’m sorry, is not level anymore.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Clark.

MR. CLARK: Hello, I’m Peter Clark from Precinct 1. I would like to speak in favor of the position in opposition to the amendment.

And you’ve heard lots about scope of management and numbers of reports, and I believe that, as a person who tried to run a large organization. I know how important it is to have so many people reporting to you that you don’t have time to do the coordination and the problem
solving with the important people.

We sat here and heard a nice - very good presentation of a comprehensive plan that had just been completed, and wanting to make it a living plan. And yet, we have a situation in which we cannot get the coordination necessary and the combination of vision and regulation. The people we have now are very, very busy with the regulatory parts of their jobs. It makes it very hard to create the vision, the coordination, to make a comprehensive plan work for the Town. We talk about wanting to make this a well run, good place to be, and you have to have the leadership to do that.

So I speak in favor of this position because it doesn’t - shouldn’t interfere with the roles of people doing their work, but it should provide for the opportunity to coordinate the vision that they bring and to have someone who is looking long-range as well as short-range, which you need both of.

This is a very important position for the health and well-being of this Town. I support it. I oppose the amendment.
Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Jones.

CHAIRMAN JONES: I just want to take a moment to correct a few misstatements.

One, any idea that we are putting forward this position because of any concern about the staff that we currently have at Town Hall and about the job they’re doing is so far from the truth. I just make it very clear: this has nothing to do with a dissatisfaction with the people that are working in Town Hall.

What it does have to do with – and nor does it – is this person going to be taking away authority from any of our regulatory boards. They can’t. The Charter won’t allow that.

What it does allow us to do is to be much more proactive as a Town instead of reactive; that we can try to prepare for some of the situations that we see coming down the road. That we can have someone who can actually look forward to working with the committees together, and so we won’t have what happened last year – last night, where we have two different boards having very opposing views. Where we have the Planning
Board making one suggestion and the Zoning Board of Appeals feels completely differently. We could have someone who gets those committees to be able to work together. And that’s what we’re looking forward to try to get done, is having someone who can really get us moving forward and prepare for some significant issues that the Town is going to be facing in the future.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Noonan.

Ms. Murphy, you’re on the list.

MR. NOONAN: John Noonan, Precinct 6.

Mr. Moderator, just a point of information. If I ask a question, the response, is that against my time?

THE MODERATOR: No, we stop the clock when they’re answering the questions.

MR. NOONAN: Thank you. I’ve got four questions.

[Laughter.]

MR. NOONAN: I guess one of my concerns is I’m not sure what the total cost of this position is. When I say the total cost, I mean the salary, the retirement funds that we have to put in, the medical, the holiday pay, the sick
pay, all of those items. What do those all add up to?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Suso.

MR. SUSO: Julian Suso, Town Manager.

There’s a range given for this position, as Town Meeting members are aware. As reflected in the proposed Fiscal Year ‘18 budget for this position, the top end, were the Town to pay the absolute maximum to this position, is a little over $100,000.

I certainly do not anticipate that we’d be bringing anyone in at that figure, but that is the salary range reflected in the minimum and maximum in the proposal before you. And you can add about 35 to 40 percent for benefits to that figure, as you would for any full time position in the Town.

MR. NOONAN: Thank you. So basically it could be up as much as 140,000.

On the second slide, all of those departments that you listed, would those report directly to that coordinator only? And that coordinator would report to you?

MR. SUSO: Yes, that’s correct.
MR. NOONAN: Thank you.

Would this position require a secretary?

MR. SUSO: As proposed in one of the slides as noted, one of them includes an existing secretary that would be asked to serve more than one department and more than one function. We have been in discussions with our clerical staff in all these permitting areas that have been shown here on the slides, and with the understanding that working with one another is the standard that we’re going to be following going forward, and all our new hires in the clerical area have been with that understanding in advance, as a cost saving measure for taxpayers.

MR. NOONAN: So my understanding is that $140,000 position won’t have a secretary.

MR. SUSO: Not an exclusive secretary, no.

MR. NOONAN: Thank you.

And Assistant Town Manager, do we have one?

[Laughter.]

MR. SUSO: The gentleman sitting to my
MR. NOONAN: And his purpose in regards to this? I mean, couldn’t he take this position and do that job?

MR. SUSO: Mr. Johnson-Staub as Assistant Town Manager has a specific job description. Recently, as Town Meeting members, many of you are aware, we created a grouping of community services departments and Mr. Johnson-Staub is overseeing all of those departments. That includes Library, Recreation and others. And that has become – that is only one of a number of functions for the Assistant Town Manager in addition to all the normal duties which that position undertakes. That’s a recent change in responsibility.

MR. NOONAN: Mr. Johnson, I meant no disrespect.

I guess my point is I’m looking at a $140,000 position. We have a Town Manager, we have an Assistant Town Manager and I would just like to see that maybe work better. Have – the departments seem to be working pretty well. But it’s a $140,000 position that I honestly believe
that you’ll be coming back to us in November or
next year and saying, “We need a full time
secretary.” So that’s more money on the table.
And that’s – I’m just concerned about
adding that to the cost of all that we’re doing.
And I would like to see a Rec Director before we
add another layer of management.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Murphy.

MS. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Moderator,
Carol Murphy, Precinct 9.

I would like to vote this amendment and
yes to removing this position from the article.
Pages 41 and 42 of the Collins study for this
position asked to hire additional staff under
this position as needed.

I would like this amendment voted yes.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Lichtenstein.

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: Leslie Lichtenstein,
Precinct 8.

I’m afraid I have to disagree with the
Selectmen. I think that last night when our
Planning Board and our Zoning Board of Appeals
both brought their professional views to this body, it enabled this body to make the right decision. Falmouth has had a Town Meeting since 1662, Folks. We function well when we get the information. I don’t want to see someone who sanitizes it all and brings us only one opinion. I am against this position, I’m sorry.

[Applause.]


MR. BROWN: Hi, Douglas Brown.

I just want to highlight one issue that may be improved by this Community Development Director.

We recently had this — one thing about the 40B process, there’s two ways for a Town to have leverage against a 40B. One is to achieve the ten percent of affordability; that’s a very elusive goal. Another one is to have an Affordable Housing Production Plan. Unfortunately we fell off the mark in 2014 and we don’t have that Affordable Housing Production Plan in place; that’s why we have very little leverage against a 40B developer coming to our
Main Street. So there is a little something that could be improved in our Town as well as the relations with developers trying to develop and asking questions and getting unclear answers.

So, if we don’t go with this, we’re going to have to come up with something else. So we’ve got some work to do. So, if this doesn’t work for you, we’ll have to think of something else to improve our system.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, anything new, Mr. Crotty?

MR. CROTTY: [No mic:] No, I just wanted to move that we vote on the amendment and the article.

THE MODERATOR: Move the previous question on the amendment, to close discussion on the amendment.

All those in favor of closing discussion on the amendment, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.] 

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds. So the question is going to come on
the amendment. This is to remove the Community
Development Director from the main motion. To
remove the position from the main motion.

All those in favor of removing the
position, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: All those in favor,
signify by standing and the tellers will return a
count.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: In the first division,
Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: 23.

THE MODERATOR: 23.

In the third division, Ms. Schneider.

MS. SCHNEIDER: 29.

THE MODERATOR: 29.

In the second division, Ms. Cuny.

MS. CUNY: 49.

THE MODERATOR: 49.

All those opposed signify by standing
and the tellers will return a count.
[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: In the first division.

MR. NETTO: 20.

THE MODERATOR: 20.

In the third division.

MS. SCHNEIDER: 29.

THE MODERATOR: 29.

In the second division.

MS. CUNY: 33.

THE MODERATOR: 33.

By a counted vote of 101 in favor and 82 opposed, we strike the Community Development Director from the main motion.

[Applause.]


FROM THE FLOOR: Break.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, we’re going to take a break, but I don’t want to do it in the middle of this article.

Ms. Putnam. Microphone for Ms. Putnam, someone, please?

MS. PUTNAM: Rebecca Putnam, Precinct 9.
I would like to make an amendment to this article. Now that we’ve taken this other position out of play, on behalf of the Fire Department, the Police Department and our community, and our community’s safety, I would like to ask that we add one police officer and one fireman to each department. There is more than enough that we just removed to cover it.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Putnam, Ms. Putnam, we have Police positions, DPW positions, Fire positions that are already within the Classification Plan but haven’t been budgeted. So this article is to create positions within the Classification Plan and then, if we ever get through a break and come back and do the budget, we’ll actually be funding positions.

So we have positions that could be funded if we had revenue that are already in the Classification Plan. So do you really have the desire and the need to make amendments? If so, I’m going to need the specific positions, the grades, the levels and the salary ranges.

FROM THE FLOOR: No.
THE MODERATOR: Yeah, she’s not ready for that, okay.

Further discussion? Mr. Netto? No.

Mr. Lowell? No. Any other discussion on Article 16?

FROM THE FLOOR: No.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, the question will come on the main motion, which is as amended, removing the Community Development Director. All those in favor of the main motion, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous and let’s take a 15 minute break. And only 15.

[Whereupon, a recess was held.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, all Town Meeting members present please rise for the establishment of the quorum.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: I want to also make an announcement that the Barnstable County Home
Consortium has prepared its 2017 Annual Plan for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the plan is open for public comment. It’ll be posted with the information on the Town website as to how you can submit comments if you’d like to do that. You can also submit them to the Barnstable County Commissioner’s Office down in Barnstable.

So, again, it’s the Barnstable County Home Consortium 2017 draft Annual Plan is currently open for public comment.

In the first division, Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: 42.

THE MODERATOR: 42.

In the second division, Ms. Cuny.

MS. CUNY: 77.

THE MODERATOR: 77.

In the third division.

MS. SCHNEIDER: 57.

THE MODERATOR: 57.

By a counted vote of 176, we have a quorum and I call the Annual Town Meeting back into session.

Article 17. The recommendation by the
Community Preservation Committee.

MS. CARMICHAEL: The Committee recommends arppoval of the article as written.

THE MODERATOR: As recommended. This is to add M-6, the Community Preservation Fund Administrator. This was held by Mr. Donahue.

MR. DONAHUE: [No mic: inaudible.]

THE MODERATOR: Any further discussion on Article 17?

Hearing none, the question will come on the main motion as recommended. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it unanimous.

MS. CARMICHAEL: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Article 18 is the omnibus budget. Madame Chairman for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN VOGEL: Mr. Moderator, I move Article 18 as recommended, deleting lines 70 to 72 for the Community Development position. That
will change the raise and appropriate number on the last yellow page in the center to $123,082,496. The total Operating Budget number will change to $128,295,251.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, the main motion as recommended, removing the Community Development Director line item 70 to 72 and adjusting the figures appropriately.

Do we have a presentation? Mr. Suso.

MR. SUSO: Thank you, Mr. Moderator, Julian Suso, Falmouth Town Manager.

Article 18 is the Annual Operating Budget for the Town of Falmouth, as Town Meeting members are aware. As a lead-in, I want to note to members of Town Meeting that the Town has completed its first ever Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. It was presented to the Board of Selectmen recently. And here it is. It’s been online for several weeks.

The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report or CAFR, again the first version was for Fiscal Year ’16. It’s an overview of all the Town’s services, everything that it provides and that we’re privileged to deliver to you in basic
services. It is a financial section, which includes the audited financial statements for the Town and a full statistical section which has some fascinating information about the Town. It may even include some things that you weren’t aware of.

I want to underscore this has been a goal of the Board of Selectmen and this Town Manager and we’re delighted to deliver on that goal. We are now one of only 31 communities in the Commonwealth that have a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Less than ten percent of the communities in this state have such a report and it is a wealth of financial information and its purpose is to better serve you.

So please take advantage of it and if you have questions, either I or Finance Director Jennifer Petit would be pleased to answer those. I do want to thank Jennifer for her leadership and that of her highly capable staff in working to deliver this important financial product annually to all the residents of the Town.

Let’s talk about the FY ‘18 Budget and budget increases. FY’18 will be the second
consecutive year in which I brought a budget to
the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and
Town Meeting that includes that hiring of an
additional firefighter. It is the only full time
public safety position that’s been recommended
for an addition, and again for the second
consecutive year.

I also want to note that, as Chief Dunne
will confirm, there was some earlier discussion
about additional needs in public safety and I do
want to take a moment to comment on that. In
addition to this being the second consecutive
year for a full time firefighter proposed to be
hired, in the Police Department with the
completion of the Consolidated Communications
Center, which was – just had gone live within the
past month or so, as I believe you’re aware, the
Chief Dunne now has an additional police officer
in every shift for him to be able to manage and
assign to critical public safety tasks and
enhance safety in all our neighborhoods. Chief
Dunne has been anticipating that; with the cut-
over it’s finally become available to him, and
what we intend to do is to evaluate what affect
that is having on public safety in the Town and
appropriately assess what the needs are in a
future budget year.

So, I just want to underscore that, with
the support of Town Meeting, we have been
enhancing our public safety services within this
town, within your existing budget, and living
within our means. And we anticipate that to
continue with your support.

As you’ll note, the budget increases has
included a proposed Community Development
Director. We’ll move beyond that. It also
included, as a reminder, the deletion of the
Assistant Wastewater Superintendent. That
continues.

The budget for FY’18 also includes
additional staff hours in the building area, in
health and in human services, and it also
includes a long-anticipated additional technician
in the Wastewater Department, and that’s
consistent with the needs because of the
expansion in the wastewater area that’s reflected
in the Little Pond Sewer Service Area that is
underway but nearing completion.
Budget increases continuing. 10.8 percent increase in health insurance. In the budget that would begin July 1, that’s about $1.6 million.

The School Department budget increase is 2.3 percent, slightly over $1 million. And I do want to underscore what a pleasure it is in working with Superintendent Nancy Taylor, Patrick Murphy as the Finance Director there. Jennifer Petit and I take particular pleasure in working with our colleagues in the School Department side.

We have a five percent increase in the Retirement Assessment, representing $368,146. As you may be aware, we have 20 new students attending the Upper Cape Regional Technical School. That automatically translates to an increase of $418,000 that needs to be budgeted to cover those costs.

We have $350,000 in the FY ‘18 Budget representing the need for a new solid waste contract. The negotiations on that are currently underway. We anticipate needing additional resources in that ballpark.
The Fire Department’s salary agreement, which was a mediated settlement and was financed previously with a stand-alone Town Meeting article, now has to be incorporated routinely into to FY – the annual budget. In this case, FY’18. This represents an additional $375,000 beyond what we had in FY ‘17 in the Annual Budget.

The insurance, ESCO Project Debt and Information Technology are an additional $360,000 in the budget we’re bringing to you now.

And I will step aside and have Finance Director Jennifer Petit talk to you about one of her favorite subjects, debt, on which she and her colleagues do an incredible job in living within our means, as you’ll continue to see.

Jennifer.

[Applause.]

MS. PETIT: Thank you.

I just want to mention quickly, and I want to thank the department heads and support staff in the Finance Department; they do an incredible job. And, you know, Tricia Favulli, Patty O’Connell, Vicky Rose, Stacey Stokes and
Melanie Bush are real – assist a lot in what, you
know, when we put a lot of this together, and
they’ve done a great job. And I just, you know,
really wanted to mention that.

So, when you look at the FY ‘18 budget,
a big issue in the ‘18 budget, or I really
couldn’t call it an issue, is really we’re
incorporating the debt, a lot of debt into the
‘18 budget. And we started that in FY ‘17. As
you know, a few years ago we voted $100 million
in infrastructure projects for a water filtration
plant and also for the Little Pond Sewer Service
area. And when that was voted, we started the
project; now we had to put that financial plan in
place. And part of that financial plan was to
use our debt drop-off and other revenue sources
in order to support the tax levy not increasing
more than the allowable 2 ½ percent.

So, in the FY ‘17 budget we incorporated
principal and interest on thirty-one and a half
million dollars from the Mass. Water Pollution
Abatement Trust. And last December we refinanced
$4 million in debt, and the Town bonded $9
million since the interest rates were low, and we
rolled the cost of borrowing into the refinance. So really what happened is we were presented with a refinancing opportunity last year. And we had a lot of short term debt. And in the financial plan we were going to just keep the debt for another year, but the interest rates were low; we didn’t know what was going to happen with interest rates, we had a refinancing opportunity, so a lot of our short term debt that we only pay interest on, we went out to the market to issue bonds so we’d start paying principal and interest and take advantage of the low interest rates that were outside of the Mass. Water Pollution Abatement Trust.

So, because we did that, we did borrow for or bond a second phase of the ESCO project, which is within Proposition 2 ½, and I’ll get to that in a minute.

So the FY ‘18 budget includes principal and interest on an additional 45 million dollars of debt. Thirty-four million was from the Mass. Water Pollution Abatement Trust. So the good news is we’ve incorporated over $70 million of that hundred million into the budget, and we’re
looking at the only tax increase would be the allowable 2 ½ percent from Proposition 2 ½.

[Applause.]

MS. PETIT: Thank you.

Our debt policy. Last September, the Board of Selectmen voted to update the financial policy from 2006, and we updated it substantially. And part of that is we really wanted to incorporate what Town Meeting has been hearing for a number of years, is that window of opportunity, the debt drop-off and taking advantage of that so not to artificially increase the tax levy.

So, part of our debt policy, it does state excluded debt and capital exclusions will be issued in a manner that stabilizes the tax levy over a number of years. The Finance Director will maintain a financing plan that calculates the current and future debt capacity. And I’ll show you the graph in a minute which I have done.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Petit, we’re up at ten minutes. So if you could just let us know how much longer and we’ll take a vote.
MS. PETIT: Five.

THE MODERATOR: Five more minutes.

All those in favor of an additional five minutes for the budget presentation, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it by the two-thirds and we’ll continue on.

[laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Petit.

MS. PETIT: Thank you. I’ll move this along.

The financing plan incorporates the water rate increase voted by the Board of Selectmen in May of 2016, and it also includes the betterment revenue when Little Pond Sewer Service Area is completed.

So there’s an increase of 2.4 million of principal interest in FY 2018. 2.2 million is of additional excluded debt that will be offset by 1.3 million from the Debt Stabilization Fund. If you recall, we’ve been voting money into the
Debt Stabilization Fund because the original financing plan we were sure when the Mass. Water Pollution Abatement Trust, the Trust would go out to bond, and so we’re really – when they tell us “We’re going to bond, you have to start paying principal and interest”, we have to be ready for that. So we’re a little bit proactive. So you’ll see 1.3 million from the Debt Stabilization Fund to offset that levy.

So, I know this doesn’t comply with the Rules in Town Meeting about font size and everything, but there’s so many numbers that go to - oops - go to this - that I just want to show. I don’t think they have the red dot, but just if you can pay attention to the far left graph. That’s like around 10.3 million. So that’s really where we stabilized our debt.

And, as you can see with all the other different colors, we’ve incorporated new projects. And you can see we’ve kept the levy steady. We’re going to have a little bit of drop off in 2021, and the Senior Center’s incorporated into that, as well. It was, you know, a future article at 9 ½ million. And I
wanted to show you all that because this is the Financing Plan that I am to update periodically according to the debt policy.

So, as you can see, the future debt drop-off and all the projects that we’re looking at.

So, just to run through some things that I’ve mentioned before and I’ve mentioned every year: revenues and expenses. You know, we want to make sure reoccurring revenues fund recurring expenses. You don’t want to use one-time revenue for recurring expenses; you will get into a deficit. And our reoccurring revenues are four major ones, and it’s calculated in the back of your book in your Appendix you can see how we calculate the tax levy and all the revenues that we recommend to support the budget.

You have property taxes, state aid, estimated local receipts and other available funds, which are the special revenue and the trust funds. A lot of that are separate accounts that we use to transfer in to support the debt.

One time revenues fund one time
expenses. Free Cash and reserves, you do not
want to use those, and it’s part of our policy to
fund recurring revenue because it’s unsustainable
— recurring expenses because it’s unsustainable.

So, the property taxes. We have a 2 ½
percent levy capacity, Proposition 2 ½. We have
an estimated new growth. We estimated it at
around 700,000 this year. And, again, the Town
utilized its debt drop-off and more, issuing $45
million in debt for FY ’18.

Your Estimated Local Receipts are made
up of your motor vehicle excise, hotel/motel and
meals. The Selectmen voted a policy a few years
ago that your motel and meals tax is to be
funneled into the Capital Stabilization Fund,
which is in a separate article.

Then you have your departmental revenue,
which is your water and sewer, beach, licenses
and permits, ambulance and other.

In FY ’18 we balanced the budget on a
projected of 18.9 million in estimated local
receipts. We did use additional water and sewer
revenue to offset budget increases for the new
water filtration plant and the wastewater plant.
upgrades for the second year. That new wastewater position is for the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant and that’s the additional sewer revenue that we’ll be taking in.

And then I went over the other available funds: your parking meter, embarkation fees; they support public safety. Wetlands and waterways, your energy receipts support the debt for the wind turbines. Golf revenues, community preservation debt, bond premiums – which will come up in another article, and debt stabilization.

I think I’m just repeating myself.

So, in the levy, we have 1.3 to offset the tax levy, but we actually are transferring in 1.6 million from the Debt Stabilization Fund, and what that is is 200,000 is for the principal and interest on the ESCO. As I noted, when we took advantage of the low interest rates for the ESCO project, I wasn’t planning on bonding, so I used some of the rebates just to pay the first year of the principal and interest. And I put in from the Debt Stabilization fund. And the 137 that we’re transferring – and, if you remember with
the Library money that we voted at the last Town
Meeting, we transferred that into - well, that’s
part of another article - putting it into the
Debt Stabilization because we had to get the
money off the books and it was excluded debt.
And we can’t exclude it anymore, it has to be
within Proposition 2 ½.

And then we have our State Aid, which
we’ve level funded. Chapter 70, Education Aid.
Unrestricted Government Aid, which is the old
lottery. And then you have reimbursements; you
have School Choice reimbursement, which goes
directly to the School for their expenditure
without appropriation. And then we have Charter
School reimbursements that go into the General
Fund. And our Veteran’s Benefits and property
tax exemptions.

We do have an increase in Veterans
Benefits in the budget, and that would be
supported for the money that we’re getting in
from the state.

And this just shows you a pie chart of
really our sources of revenue and how it’s, you
know, really divvied up to support the budget.
As you can see, 74.4 percent of that is from Property Tax.

And then you have your operating budget, and this gives you some percentages. It’s a good eye check, you know, to see where the budget is going and those different categories that you do see in your warrant booklet.

Educa – no, Health Insurance. In one of the slides that Mr. Suso presented, there is a 10.8 percent increase in health insurance in the rates this year. But the way – and, as you know, and you can see, the way we’ve been budgeting health insurance, we’ve been trying to use a smoothing technique. So I only put five percent in the budget because I have money in there to support that other part of the increase. If we were going to put a 10.8 percent increase of health insurance in the budget, we’d be looking at an additional 1.3 million, which really is a budget buster.

And then you have your, you know, your Retirement, your fixed cost increases, contractual salary increases. We went over the budget increases; Mr. Suso went over that.
And then we fund part of the budget but are in separate articles. We do fund Reserves. We have over a million dollars allocated to Capital Stabilization. And these are really our savings accounts: $440,000 for your General Stabilization. We do fund our Other Post Employment Benefits. And we continue to fund the Worker’s Compensation Trust Fund.

And these are – we do have appropriations that we have to incorporate into our Estimated Revenue when we set the tax rate, but they do not come to Town Meeting and do not need a vote of Town Meeting. And really what that is is our state assessments. We do have assessments that we have to pay the state. And our allowance for abatements, which we use to offset when we issue an abatement for our property taxes.

So, in conclusion, you know, this budget was a difficult one. Probably one of the most difficult ones I’ve put together since I’ve been here. And but it allows for flexibility. We were experiencing significant fixed cost increases. And it continues the implementation
of further exploration of departmental reorganization and cost saving measures.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, thank you, Ms. Petit.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: What we’re going to do now is we’ll go through – this is an omnibus budget, so it’s not subject to the two amendment restriction. We’ll go through it section by section. It’s not a blanket; we’re not going to do any holds. I’m going to call it off section by section; if you have questions or want to make any amendments, do that when we get to the section, and then we’ll move on.

So the first section is Town Meeting. Town Moderator. Selectmen/Town Manager.

Finance Department. Town Accountant.

Assessing Department. Town Treasurer/Collector.

Personnel Department.

Mr. Donahue. With a microphone, please.

MR. DONAHUE: Bob Donahue, Precinct 3.

On Town Treasurer, Other expenses. And
I’ve noticed this through all the different sections, there’s other expenses. And these other expenses seem to be large sums of money. Like this one is $222,220 of a total 533. Shouldn’t we list out what those others are or could you tell me what those other things, other expenses are? The Library is three hundred some odd thousand other expenses. Um. I don’t know. It’s certainly not for staples.

THE MODERATOR: Yeah, we can go through –

MS. PETIT: The other, as you noted, a lot of the – most of the departments have Other expenses. It is listed in the budget, which is online. It goes line item by line item. But we vote Other expenses. And to get directly to your question for the Treasurer/Collector’s Office, one of the – you know, we spend $50,000 a year in postage when we mail the tax bills. So those are the other expenses.

We also have administrative fees in there for the – for some of our borrowings from the Mass. Water Pollution Abatement Trust. So there’s various expenses: postage, milage, you
know, maintenance, leases of computers - not computers but really copy machines, things of that nature.

THE MODERATOR: Personnel Department.
Legal Department. Mr. Duffy also wanted me to let you know that we have some copies of the report, the case reports, up front, here, if anybody wants to take them. They're also available online.

Finance Committee. Reserve fund.

Police Department. Ms. Putnam.

MS. PUTNAM: Rebecca Putnam, Precinct 9. Now I'm on the appropriate part, I would like to add to the Police Department to Salaries and wages $52,377, which should cover a step one police officer to be added.

THE MODERATOR: It's $52,377?
MS. PUTNAM: Correct.

THE MODERATOR: To line item 95.
Discussion on addition of $52,377 to line item 95.

Mr. Lowell.

MR. LOWELL: Nick Lowell, Precinct 5, I’m a member of the Finance Committee.

I’d just like to remind Town Meeting that the Finance Committee goes very carefully through this budget, line by line. We review the personnel, et cetera. And adding a new position or funding a position in this case is just not advisable. The budget, you could think of it perhaps as a Jenga tower; adding or removing pieces is not recommended on the Town Meeting floor.

Thanks.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Herbst.

MR. HERBST: [No mic:] I’ve got a loud voice [inaudible].

THE MODERATOR: We’re going to need it for the record, though.

MR. HERBST: I just wondered don’t we have - Ralph Herbst, Precinct 8.

Don’t we have to provide a funding source when we make these kinds of things? So
is this going to come from Certified Free Cash?

THE MODERATOR: So, what I’m going to do is if you guys vote for this, then we’re going to ask for the adjustment on raise and appropriate.

MR. HERBST: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: You’ve got some wiggle room after removing the other line item.

Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: Thank you, Brent Putnam.

And, to Mr. Lowell’s comment, I would point out as you just mentioned, Mr. Moderator, that we have $104,000 for a position that we decided not to fund this evening, so there is a little bit of wiggle room here.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Joe Netto, Precinct 9.

I’d like to speak against the addition of putting this patrolman. I don’t think that this is our job as Town Meeting members to get into the daily operation of the personnel plan. You may find that surprising, but I do agree with Mr. Lowell.

Also, it’s a one-time source this year.
I know it would be built into the budget. But I think we would be better off letting those people who are in charge of personnel present us with a position that has been well thought out of and well funded. So I would speak against the additional funds for this position. Let’s do the process the correct way.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: All right, so let’s point out a few obvious things.

Brent Putnam, Precinct 9.

This is a position that is in the Classification, as we’ve been told earlier this evening. So it’s already in there. We were told it wasn’t funded. We decided not to fund a position for $104,000 which, by the way, was going to be funded in perpetuity. I don’t imagine it was a one time expense, so we were going to hire a $104,000 position for one year and then call it quits.

So, we have $104,000 to work with. And we all know that there are concerns about public safety and it’s a reasonable argument to make.
that we can take half of that, apply it to the Police Department to fund one of these approved but unfunded positions. We’re not toying with the Town’s Classification Plan. We’re not questioning management because management has the unfunded position there.

It was just a question of: was the money there for it or not. And since we have $104,000 to work with, we don’t want that position. We struck it from the Classification Plan. It was budgeted. It’s available to use, folks, in perpetuity, because we were going to fund that $104,000 position every year for the next God knows how many years.

It’s a no-brainer. Let’s go for it.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Clark.

MR. CLARK: Peter Clark, Precinct one.

I disagree with this amendment, this suggestion. I feel we should not be adding personnel on this floor. When people were arguing about what was lacking in this community, it ran across six or eight departments. There are lots and lots of departments in which added personnel might be helpful, and we can’t balance
those needs. It’s not our job. We should
leave that and let it be decided not here.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Lowell.

MR. LOWELL: Nick Lowell, Precinct 5.

I’d like to call the question on this amendment.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Motion to close
discussion on the amendment.

All in favor, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The opinion of the
chair is that the no’s have it unanimously and
the question will come on the amendment to add
$52,377 to line item 95. All those in favor of
the addition, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The opinion of the
chair is that the nos have it by a majority.

Anything else on the Police Department.

Fire Department – oh, yes, Mr. Donald.
MR. DONALD: Yeah, I have a question going back to the Legal Department. Apparently the Finneran report is presented in paper copy to us tonight. It’s a little bit - it’s a little tardy, here, and it would be really nice to have it presented before Town Meeting so we could all see it.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, it was on the website last week and we brought a -

MR. DONALD: Last week?

THE MODERATOR: - couple copies.

Yeah, we brought printed copies to Town Meeting.

MR. DONALD: Okay, sorry, I didn’t -

MR. DUFFY: It was also here last night. It’s been on the website since last week, as the Moderator said.

THE MODERATOR: Fire Department. Consolidated Communications Department. Marine & Environmental Services.

Waste Collection. DPW Wastewater Utilities.

DPW Water Utilities. Renewable energy. DPW Parks.

School Department. Upper Cape Vocational School.


Human Services.

MS. AGUIAR: Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Ms. Aguiar.

MS. AGUIAR: Deborah Aguiar, Precinct 9.

Can someone tell me what 214 is, Outmigration Prevention, what it does and so forth?

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Ms. Cordeira.

MS. CORDEIRA: Good evening. I'm Karen Cordeira. I'm the Director of the Human Services Department.

Let's see. I do have a presentation for you.

As you can see, we've changed - or we're proposing to change the funding strategy for the Human Services Funds that has been in existence
for quite some time. For more than 30 years, you’ve been funding the Operation Budget of 17 – approximately 17 agencies each year. Those 17 agencies were the same each year.

Most of those agencies 30 years ago were in their infancy and Town Meeting was looking to support the development of those programs and those programs are now strong and stable organizations. So the Human Services Committee conducted a year long strategic review of trends and community needs in Falmouth and on the Cape, as well. And they came up with five key areas of unmet needs. The full report can be located on the Human Services - falmouthhumanservices.org website.

The first need is homeless prevention, which many people have talked about here at length.

Outmigration is really the disappearance of the age group between age 25 and 44, which is a Cape-wide phenomenon that we’ve been seeing. On the Cape as a whole there’s been a 26 percent decline in one decade of that particular age group. That’s what we’re calling outmigration:
where we’re having the migration in of elders,
we’re having an outmigration of this particular
age population.

We also have mental health needs of
increasing depression and anxiety among adults
and children, as well. Substance abuse issues
have been talked about extensively here. I’ll
just pass over those because I think you’re
pretty well aware of those kinds of issues. And
there are some other support services that are in
existence but not as maybe as highly recognizable
as the initial four.

As a result of this needs assessment,
the Human Services Committee is recommending a
revision to the funding policy that you have been
funding for many years. What they’re suggesting
is that you consolidate the Human Services funds
— and in the past, it’s been about 92, 93,000
dollars a year — into the five identified unmet
needs. And utilize competitive requests for
proposals to address those needs.

And then to track the progress that
we’re making to alter some of the trends that
we’re seeing, and periodically review and revise
the areas of unmet needs every five years or so, so that we can stay abreast of current changes. We’re hoping that this new strategy will keep the funding up to date with how things are progressing in the Town, what new needs are arising, what progress we’re making to address the needs that we’ve documented in the past, and that it will be a strategy that will grow with the Town and the changing needs.

So, the budget, where you see a lot of zeros, this is actually what we’re proposing to fund. And FY ’18 is on the left and we’re proposing $20,000 for homeless prevention; $20,000 for the outmigration reduction, which is strategies to change that trend of young adults, young working adults moving off Cape; 17 for Mental Health; 26,7 for Substance Abuse; and ten for other Support Services.

Does that answer your question enough about outmigration?

FROM THE FLOOR: No.

MS. AGUIAR: No.

THE MODERATOR: So, we’ve had – you see the line items in Human Services, and over
the years we had accepted organizations that we were giving little pots of money to; and we still have those listed here. The shift in the philosophy is to go to these five programmatic areas to set some priorities within those areas for each year, put out competitive grants and then to put impact funding into the community to address those areas. Outmigration being one of them, being that age category that Ms. Cordeira mentioned as one of those five priority areas.

So, as we transfer into that five priority area, these individual line items will not exist in the future in the budget. They’ll be the five areas of the unmet needs and those would be competitive applications for community impact need.

Ms. Cordeira had the opportunity to present this to the Citizens Academy members that are currently participating, and they had a lot of good questions about it. And this will be Ms. Cordeira’s last Town Meeting as our Human Services Director, and I want to thank you on behalf of the Town for the work that you’ve done over the years as director, but particularly –
THE MODERATOR: – for bringing this innovative way of funding our future unmet needs.

[Applause continuing; standing ovation.]

MS. CORDEIRA: Thank you.

I can give you a tad more information about outmigration. When we put out a request for proposals for this $20,000, we required that agencies that were sending proposals to us had to address one of the following four issues. They had to either provide supports for family households whose income falls below a hundred percent of the area median income in order to cover basic living expenses, or they had to increase training, mentoring and advancement opportunities within small businesses or not for profit organizations to positively impact long term employment, or they had to increase housing opportunities for young families to remain on or move to the Cape; or they had to increase the engagement of young people in civic opportunities and enhance their knowledge of Cape-wide issues.

So those were the types of proposals we were looking for to address what we’re calling
outmigration.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, further discussion on Human Services.

Mr. Putnam.

MR. PUTNAM: Thank you, Mr. Moderator, Brent Putnam, Precinct 9.

Question about these programs. Sounds like a great idea, but how do we measure success? How do we know that the money that we’re putting towards these programs are actually achieving the results that we’re hoping for?

MS. CORDEIRA: This is part of the request for proposals that we put out, is that the organizations that were submitting a proposal had to build in measurements, and they’re – depending on the proposal they’re submitting, they’re required to measure the outcomes that they say they’re going to achieve.

So. And the Human Services Committee will be tracking that.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: Motion to go beyond the eleven –

THE MODERATOR: Motion to go beyond
eleven o’clock. All those in favor of going beyond eleven o’clock, signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it; we’ll go past eleven o’clock.

Any further Discussion on Human Services? Yeah, Ms. Wilson.

MS. WILSON: Holly Wilson, Precinct 1.

I’m looking around and it doesn’t appear that people around me have a copy of what Karen put up on the screen. There’s stacks of them out in the foyer, along with a lot of other information that was to enhance our ability to understand what’s going on during this meeting.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Connolly.

MS. CORDEIRA: Those were also handed out at Precinct meetings, so people may have read them earlier.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Connolly.

MS. CONNOLLY: Hi. Annie Connolly, Precinct 6. I’m on the Falmouth Human Service
Committee.

We have worked as a committee, really quite diligently under Karen’s and her professional staff’s guidance to review the variety of unmet human service needs in Falmouth. I would strongly encourage you to pass this as presented and not hold it or amend it or do any of that other stuff.

Additionally, we have a vacancy, I believe, on the committee. Two, two vacancies. So if you’d like to join us, we’d love to have you.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Further discussion on Human Services.

Ms. Aguiar.

MS. AGUIAR: Deborah Aguiar, Precinct 9.

Quickly. I’m looking at the rest of the Human Services and there are an awful lot of zeroes. Now, just so I can understand, is this being combined next year or what is the story on that? I’m a little confused.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Cordeira.
MS. CORDEIRA: Yes, the funding, in the past, you funded 17 agencies with these small amounts. And you can see the agencies listed here and all of the small amounts. Those all added up to what we’re recommending be distributed now just to five unmet – to address five unmet needs. So we’re no longer going to be funding the operating budgets of these 17 agencies.

Does that make sense?

FROM THE FLOOR: Yes, yes.


Yes, Mr. Noonan.

MR. NOONAN: I just have a question on the health insurance. You had mentioned that you only carried a five percent increase and there was a 12 percent increase. So should we look for a larger increase next year? In other words, if it goes up ten percent, am I going to look at a 17 percent increase?
MS. PETIT: I have a slide.

If you could put that up real quick, if
you don’t mind. It’s Article 33.

And it will just answer your question
and just kind of -

Okay, so if you look at this graph, you
have a line graph with the black line. That has
been our rate increases over the last few years.
As you can see, the rate increases are high. We
have some savings in the budget, and what we’ve
been doing, even in the year when we had a 1.8
percent increase, we still put like 3 ½ in there
because we’re building a savings in that budget.

As you can see, what we’re budgeting
health insurance has been seven, six and five.

Now, if the rates are going to continue
to climb more than, you know, five to seven
percent, then those two lines will meet at some
point. But it really is a smoothing technique
so I don’t have to look at the budget and try to
come up with like one point - you know, 3 million
one year and then maybe 400,000 the next.

So, no, we’re good right now. And
you’ll notice in another article we’ll be
transferring some money.

THE MODERATOR:  Okay, Life Insurance.

Medicare Tax.  Other Employee Benefits.  Court

Judgments.  Town Insurance.

Long Term Excluded Debt.  Long Term

Unexcluded Debt.  Short Term Debt.

Any further discussion on the Fiscal '18

Budget?  Hearing none, then the question will

come on the main motion as presented by the

Finance Committee.

All those in favor, signify by saying

Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR:  All those opposed no.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR:  The Ayes have it

unanimous.

Do we want to do one more or do you want

to call it a night?

All those in favor of adjourning,

signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR:  All those opposed no.

[No.]
THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it and I’ll see you at 7:00 tomorrow.

[11:00 p.m. Whereupon, Town Meeting adjourned.]
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE, SS

I, Carol P. Tinkham, a Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate record of Night One of the Falmouth Annual Town Meeting, taken by me on Tuesday, April 4, 2017. To the best of my ability the within transcript is a complete, true and accurate record.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and Notary Seal this 13th Day of May, 2017.

_________________________________________________________________
Carol P. Tinkham, Notary Public
My Commission Expires: April 5, 2024

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