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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

TOWN OF FALMOUTH

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Lawrence School
Lakeview Avenue
Falmouth, Massachusetts

MODERATOR: David T. Vieira

Monday, April 3, 2006

7:00 p.m.

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ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

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PROCEEDINGS

THE MODERATOR: Town Meeting Members come and take your seats. Don't forget to check in this evening as attendance is required and will be published in the Falmouth Enterprise.

I want to remind everyone that attendance is being published in the Falmouth Enterprise. I want to remind all members if you don't sit in the front of roped-off rows, your votes will not be counted this evening. I want to thank FCTV-13 for a live broadcast of Town Meeting.

Our tellers this evening in the first division will be Mrs. Tashiro, in the second division will be Mr. Dufresne, and in the third division will be Mr. Hampson.

You will notice this evening that we have some new technology for our sign language interpretation. It's actually going to be done on a CART system by Teri Gibson. I want to remind town meeting members to give your name and precinct each time you speak for the record, and Carol Tinkham is taking our transcribed record this evening.

At this time, would all town meeting members present please rise for the establishment of the quorum. And would the tellers return the quorum.

[Pause.]

THE MODERATOR: Division one, Mrs. Tashiro.

MRS. TASHIRO: 54.

THE MODERATOR: 54.

Division 2. Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: 95.

THE MODERATOR: 95.

Division 3, Mr. Hampson.

MR. HAMPSON: 53.

THE MODERATOR: 53.

By counted vote of 202 I call this

Annual Town Meeting to session. Would all members please rise for the presentation of the colors by Junior Girl Scout Troop 261.

[Colors presented.]

[Pledge of Allegiance taken.]

THE MODERATOR: Please remain standing

for the National Anthem played by the Falmouth Town Band Brass Choir.

[National Anthem played.]

THE MODERATOR: At this time, Mary Pat

Flynn, our former select woman, will give our invocation.

MS. FLYNN: 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 we will

pause for a moment of silence in honor of all of our Town Meeting Members who have passed since our last meeting, particularly Douglas Souza of East Falmouth.

[Moment of Silence.]

THE MODERATOR: Colors, post.

Let's have a round of applause for
Junior Girl Scout Troop 261.

[[Applause.]]

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, girls.

At this time, I would like to start with
the dispensing of the reading of the warrant. Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN MURPHY: Mr. Moderator, I move
that we dispense with the reading of the warrant.

THE MODERATOR: 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 Officers
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 every precinct in the town. Signed Constable Melinda Rebello.

Mr. Clerk, I ask that the Warrant
become an official part of the record.

At this time, the Chair would entertain
a motion to allow non-Town Meeting Members to sit up front with their
respective boards and committees

FROM THE FLOOR: Move.

THE MODERATOR: 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 to allow Town employees who are not residents of the Town the right
to speak on any issue before the Town Meeting.

FROM THE FLOOR: So moved.

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

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[None apposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The ayes have it.

At this time, I'll recognize the Planning
Board for Notification of Public Hearing.

MS. KERFOOT: In accordance with Chapter
40A, Section 5, Massachusetts General Law, and Article 43 of the Falmouth
Zoning Bylaw, a public hearing was held on February 14, 2006, on Articles
18, 19 and 20 for the April 3rd, 2006, Annual Town Meeting and those who
wished to speak were heard.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. If you will all
turn in to the back cover of your warrant booklet, we will briefly review
the Meeting Rules. Speaking and voting. Registered voters, residents and
taxpayers of the town may speak on any article in the warrant. Persons who
are not voters, residents or taxpayers of the town may address the Meeting
only with the consent of a majority of those present. Only Town Meeting
members may vote.

Motions and amendments. Motions and
Amendments may be made only by Town Meeting members. Two amendments will be
accepted on any article. The only exception to that is on the omnibus
budget. Long or complicated motions and other motions which he shall so

request shall be presented to the Moderator in writing.

Reconsideration. Reconsideration will be allowed at any time during the meeting if the article does not involve the appropriation of money. If the article involves the appropriation of money, notice of reconsideration must be given within 30 minutes of the vote on the article. Reconsideration may then be allowed at any future time.

Our hours of operation tonight will be 7:00, subsequent nights will be 7:00, and we'll close at 11:00 o'clock each night unless a motion to continue is made and approved by a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting Members.

Okay. We're going to use a blanket vote on the Annual. During the blanket vote, I'll go through each article on the warrant one by one, give you a brief description. If you don't hold the article, our blanket vote will adopt all articles not held as recommended. You will notice there are a series of articles in this Town Meeting where there is a recommendation by the Community Preservation Committee, and there is also a recommendation by the Finance Committee. The vote on the blanket for all Community Preservation articles is a vote of the Community Preservation Committee recommendation. The Finance Committee has added their recommendation for the convenience of the voters.

So I'll go through it slowly once, I'll go through the article quickly a second time, and then we will take a motion to adopt all articles that are not held as recommended.

Article 1, to choose all necessary town officers is a hold. Article 2, to hear reports of committees, is a hold.

Article 3, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to settle claims and suits. Article 4, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept state or federal grants. Article 5, vote to assume the liability in the manner provided by Section 29 of Chapter 91 of the General Laws for all damages that may be incurred by work to be performed by the Department of Public works of Massachusetts. Article 6, to

fix the salaries of elected officials. Article 7, to authorize continued use of the revolving funds previously established for the Code of Falmouth and the Falmouth Recreation Department.

Article 8, the recommendation is

indefinite postponement to create a revolving fund for the Falmouth Historical Commission.

Article 9 --

MS. LEMOINE: Hold, please.

THE MODERATOR: Hold by the Finance committee.

Article 10, to see if the town will vote that funds received by the Town of Falmouth as part of the Medicaid Medical Services Program are allotted to the School Committee. Article 11 is the omnibus budget and it is a hold.

Article 12, the recommendation is indefinite postponement to delete a beach committee clerk and to add a town collector clerk.

Article 13, to delete 48 firefighter paramedics and to add 50 firefighter paramedics.

MR. BOYER: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold by Mr. Boyer.

Article 14. Hold by Mr. Boyer. Article 15, hold by Mr. Boyer. Article 16, hold by the Finance Committee.

Article 17. This is to delete call firefighter step 5 and to add call firefighter step 5, changing the value there from 12.46 to 14.21.

Article 18 is a hold for the Planning Board to make its recommendation. Article 19, this is to amend the Historic Village Center overlay district. The recommendation is as printed with the changes listed in the recommendation.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold 19.

THE MODERATOR: Hold.

Article 20. Vote to amend the official zoning map by adopting the Historic Village Center overlay district on all B-3 zoned property on County Road --

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: -- and Old Main Road.

21 is a hold by the Fin Com. 22, to transfer \$15,000 from Certified Free Cash to enter into a contract for engineering and consulting services to prepare response action for the oil spill at 20 Academy Lane. Article 23, to transfer \$20,000 from the Reserve Waterways Appropriation Fund for the installation of tie-off pilings at the town marina.

MR. SHEARER: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 24, this is the Community Preservation: vote to transfer the sum of \$60,000 from the Community Preservation Fund, to be made available to the Habitat for Humanity for the purpose of constructing affordable housing on parcels on Sam Turner Road.

Article 25.

MS. STETSON: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Abbott. Or was it Judy Stetson? I'm sorry, Ms. Stetson.

Article 26.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Who is holding this one?

Article 27, to vote to transfer the sum of \$250,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Falmouth Housing Authority for the purpose of an affordable housing retention program.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Who held this one?

Article 28, to transfer the sum of \$250,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to Historic Highfield for the purpose of contributing to the cost of installation of a new HVAC system.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 29. Vote to transfer the sum of \$150,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of partial reimbursement of the cost of the renovation of 26 Academy Lane.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 30, vote to transfer the sum of \$27,650.00 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the United Methodist Church for the purpose of professional cleaning and preservation of gravestones at the East Falmouth Burial Ground.

MR. FREEMAN: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold by Mr. Freeman.

Article 31, to vote to transfer the sum of \$30,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Falmouth Historical Commission for the purpose of professional surveying and cataloging of historic structures built prior to 1930.

Article 32. To vote to transfer sum of \$28,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Falmouth Historical Society for the purpose of designing climate control facilities at 55 and 56 Palmer Avenue.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 33, to vote to transfer the sum of \$300,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Recreation Committee for the purpose of constructing recreation field facilities on Sandwich Road.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR Article 34, to vote to transfer the sum of \$20,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Town Building Committee for the purpose of completing final designs of the Town Band Shell, new construction under CPA, category of Recreation.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Where is that one coming from? Okay.

Article 35. To vote to transfer the sum of \$1,400 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the East Falmouth Village Association for the purpose of purchasing two park benches for the East Falmouth Fire Station.

MR. SHEARER: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold, Mr. Shearer.

Sometimes the blanket makes it go quicker.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: To vote to transfer the sum of \$200,000 from the Community Preservation Fund as an open space reserve for the purpose of open space land acquisition under CPA.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Aguiar.

Article 37, to vote to transfer the sum of \$100,000 from the Community Preservation Fund to be made available to the Community Preservation Committee for the purpose of administrative expenses of the committee and including one professional staff position.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold that, please.

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

Article 38. To vote to transfer the sum of \$105,000 from the Community Preservation Fund for an annual budgeted reserve.

MR. BOYER: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold by Mr. Boyer.

Article 39. To vote to transfer the sum of \$1 million for road and sidewalk improvements including costs incidental and related thereto, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to borrow the million dollars under Chapter 44.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 40, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to let or lease town-owned property at 67 Davisville Road in East Falmouth known as the Emerald House, for a term in excess of 10 years.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 41, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to let or lease a parcel of land containing one acre more or less at the Town's wastewater treatment facility property at 154 Blacksmith Shop Road for the purposes of erecting, maintaining and operating a wind turbine.

Article 42. To authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or otherwise convey two parcels of land on Cloverfield Way in Hatchville for affordable housing.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 43. To authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or otherwise convey two parcels of land at the intersection of Ward and Chester Streets in North Falmouth for affordable housing.

Article 44, the recommendation is indefinite postponement on a demolition -- Chapter 107 Demolition Bylaw of the Code of Falmouth.

Article 45, recommendation indefinite postponement to amend the Code of Falmouth for dogs at large.

Now we're going to get into a series of articles that were recommendations by the Charter Commission, the Charter

Review Committee. The first one is an amendment to change the town administrator title to town manager.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 47, the Watchman of the Warrant. This would change it to make the moderator serve as the watchman of the warrant.

Article 48. Policy and leadership.
Defining the role of Board of Selectmen.

Article 49. Dealing with administration.
There is a hold?

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 50. This is the powers to appoint ad hoc committees.

Article 51, dealing with the compensation of the town clerk.

Article 52. Dealing with the responsibilities of the Planning Board.

Article 53. This deletes the requirement of town residency for the town administrator.

MR. SHEARER: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Shearer.

Article 54. Responsibility for appointment, appointing by the town administrator, the positions and how he or she can remove those appointments.

Article 55. This is the residency requirement for other town officials.

MR. KRAJEWSKI: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 56. This is the provision of the acting town administrator. This makes the assistant town administrator the acting town administrator in the absence of the town administrator.

Article 57. The general provisions of appointed town boards. Limits serving on them no more than three consecutive three year terms.

Article 58, deals with submission of the budget message to review the salaries of all elected officials annually upon the Finance Committee to bring it to town meeting.

Article 59. The recommendation is indefinite postponement on money for funding design, permitting, and construction, repair restoration or replacement of the sea wall on Gardner Road in Woods Hole.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold.

Article 60. To authorize the Board of Selectmen to grant an easement for underground utilities up at the high school.

Article 61 is to authorize the Board of Health or the Health Agent to enter into inter-municipal agreements with other bodies to provide public health services.

Article 67 is a hold by the Finance Committee for its recommendation -- 62, excuse me.

All right. We'll run through it real quick. Again, Article 1 was a hold. Article 2 was a hold.

Article 3. Article 4. Article 5. Article 6. Article 7.
Article 8.

Article 9 is a hold.

Article 10.

Article 11 is hold.

Article 12.

Article 13 is a hold. Article 14 is a hold. Article 15 is a hold. Article 16 is a hold.

Article 17.

Article 18 is a hold. Article 19 is a hold. Article 20 is a hold. Article 21 is a hold.

Article 22.

Article 23 is a hold.

Article 24.

Article 25 is a hold. Article 26 is a hold. 27 is a hold. 28 is a hold. 29 is a hold. 30 is a hold.

Article 31.

Article 32 is a hold. Article 33 is a hold. Article 34 is a hold. Article 35 is a hold. Article 36 is a hold. Article 37 is a hold. Article 38 is a hold. Article 39 is a hold. Article 40 is a hold.

Article 41.

Article 42 was held.

Article 43. Article 44.

FROM THE FLOOR: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Article 45.

Article 46 is a hold.

Article 47. Article 48.

Article 49 is a hold.

Article 50. Article 51. Article 52.

Article 53 is a hold.

Article 54.

Article 55 is a hold.

Article 56. Article 57.

MR. MARKS: Hold.

THE MODERATOR: Hold, Mr. Marks.

Article 58.

Article 59 is a hold.

Article 60. Article 61.

Article 62 is a hold.

Madam Chairman for the main motion on the blanket vote.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I move

that all articles that have been passed and not held be and hereby are adopted as recommended as the official action of this Town Meeting, and that the necessary monies for the same shall be raised and appropriated or as otherwise specified.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, you've all heard the main motion on the blanket. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed No.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it unanimous.

Madame Chairman for notification.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I hereby serve notice of reconsideration of all articles passed under the blanket vote.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Let's start off with Article 1. This is to choose necessary Town Officers, which is the Finance Committee. I have before me nominations for five returning members for their three year terms and one individual to fill a two year unexpired term. The nominations for the three year terms are Steven Augusta, Frances Connolly, Weatherly Dorris, Barbara Perry, Susan Smith, and to fill the two year unexpired term, Judith Magnani. Are there any nominations from the floor?

Hearing none, the chair would entertain a motion to close nominations.

FROM THE FLOOR: Moved.

THE MODERATOR: So moved. All those in favor of closing nominations signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it
unanimous.

The question will now come on the
appointments as recommended by the nomination. All those in favor, signify
by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it
unanimous.

Thank you all very much for your service and continued service on
the Finance Committee.

Article 2. To hear reports of committees
and Town Officers. Are there any committees or town officers who would like
to make a report to the Town Meeting?

Hearing none, the chair will entertain
the main motion. Madam Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I move
Article 2 as printed.

THE MODERATOR: Article 2 as printed. Last shot. Any town
committees want to
make a report?

Hearing none, the question will come to
accept all reports that we didn't hear. All those in favor signify by
saying Aye.

[Laughter.]

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[None opposed.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it unanimous.

Article 9, this was held by the Finance Committee. Madame Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator and Town Meeting Members, please bear with me. I am going to read the motion. I move Article 9 to see if the Town will vote to create a revolving fund under the provisions of General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E ½, to be known as the "Shellfish Propagation Revolving Account", said account to be established and administered as follows.

a. Shellfish mitigation payments and related donations received by the Falmouth Conservation Commission shall be credited to the Revolving fund. b. Funds shall be expended for the purchase of shellfish seed for the Department's shellfish propagation programs and activities.

c. All funds shall be expended by the Department of Natural Resources, with the provision that any expenditure in excess of \$500 shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

d. Expenditures may not exceed receipts during any fiscal year without approval of the Finance Committee.

The Department of Natural Resources shall report annually to the Board of Selectmen the total amount of receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year. This fund shall be authorized annually, at which time the above-mentioned provisions may be amended by an Annual Town Meeting vote. Or do or take any other action on this matter.

I so move, Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, so the main motion is what you have printed in your warrant booklet. The changes are section b, which specifically talks about the purchase of seed; section c which

changes "Conservation Commission" to the "Department of Natural Resources"; and the final paragraph changing "Conservation Commission" to the "Department of Natural Resources".

Any further discussion on Article 9?

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Would you like an explanation?

THE MODERATOR: Madam Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Just to let Town Meeting Members know, when this was originally presented to the Finance Committee, there was some confusion over whether a Revolving account was an appropriate place to put these funds. It's been determined in the last week that it is in fact an appropriate place to put the funds. Since shellfish propagation falls under the purview of the Department of Natural Resources, the shellfish warden specifically, we decided tonight to vote to put the Department of Natural Resources as responsible for the monies once they're deposited into that account.

MS. STETSON: Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Microphone at the back. And then --

MS. STETSON: Judy Stetson, Precinct 1.

I think this is an excellent motion. I'm very glad to hear it. I have a question. How does the Conservation Commission decide how much money to request from applicants for shellfish mitigation?

I have not really been able to understand their criteria for setting the specific amounts they charge applicants.

THE MODERATOR: Would someone from the Con Com like to answer that? Microphone down here.

MR. GROZIER: Thank you. Brian Grozier, Chairman of the Con Com. We rewrote our shellfish regulations a few years ago. In that process, we provided for applicants who might have shellfish on the shoreline, et cetera, but not where the boat was going to be kept to contribute towards the shellfish mitigation fund. It is up to the applicant

to offer a dollar amount. It was deemed by Town Counsel that we can't mandate an exact dollar amount, but it has been uniform in the process, that the applicants understand that if it's a little bit of shellfish, it's like \$500. If it's a lot of shellfish, which then it might be thousands. But it's up to the applicant to determine as to how much they are going to contribute, and it's part of our regulations, which simply state that if there's shellfish anywhere in the dock except for the mooring field, then to get approval, they should donate funds to this mitigation fund.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Just a point of information, if I may, Mr. Moderator, to the chairman of the Finance Committee. Under B, did you replace "may" with "shall"? Did I hear you correctly? So it says, "funds shall be expended"?

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Yes, you did.

MR. NETTO: Okay. So that, if that word now says "shall", then 100 percent of these funds have to be spent, correct, for the administration and propagation of shellfish, is that correct to assume that?

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: No. We specifically took out "operation and mitigation" and put "funds shall be expended for the purchase of shellfish seed for the department's shellfish propagation programs and actives", and we did that very deliberately so the funds have to be used for which the monies were donated.

MR. NETTO: Thank you. And again, very good job. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Any further discussion on Article 9? Mr. Lynch.

MR. LYNCH: Kevin Lynch, Precinct 3. With regard to mitigation payments or funds, we were getting mitigation funds for the Bikeway Committee through the Planning Board and had recently been told by the Town Accountant's Office that any requirement of funds has

to go into the General Fund and then must be reallocated or re-appropriated by Town Meeting. I wonder if that is the case here.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Duffy, do you want to address that?

MR. DUFFY: You're partially right, Mr.

Lynch. The money received is supposed to go into the General Fund unless Town Meeting establishes a Revolving Fund in which to put it in.

THE MODERATOR: I sense an article at the next Town Meeting on the warrant. Any further discussion on Article 9?

Hearing none, the question will come on the main motion as read by the Chair of 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.

Okay. Now, we have Article 11, which is

the omnibus budget, and I have a memo here from the Finance Committee that I would like to read and get a sense of the body on how we're going to proceed. [Reading:] On January 23rd, 2006, the Selectmen voted the articles and executed the warrant for the April, 2006, Annual Town Meeting. At which time the Selectmen voted to change the order of the articles submitted by placing the omnibus budget article before the position classification articles.

The Finance Committee would like to request that since the funding for the position classification articles 12 through 15 is in the omnibus budget Article 11, that the position classification articles be considered prior to the omnibus article. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Traditionally in the past, we have done

the classification plan before the omnibus budget. For some reason, they are placed in a different order on this warrant by the Selectmen. So I would like to get a sense of the body. My inclination is to go with the Finance Committee and go with the past practice. Is there any objection to taking the position classifications before the omnibus budget?

Hearing no objection, we will start with the position classification articles that were held. Article 13 was the first hold.

Madame Chairman for the main motion and then Mr. Boyer.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I move Article 13 as printed.

THE MODERATOR: As printed. This is to delete 48 Firefighter Paramedics and to add 50 Firefighter Paramedics.

MR. BOYER: Mr. Moderator, Peter Boyer, Precinct 5. I really did not want to be the lead off hitter of this. My impulse for raising the issue on this particular article comes from an opinion related to Article 11. I believe that the financial strategy that has been employed under Article 11 really is not supportable in my view. And I am speaking specifically about the proposed debt exclusion of the water money. But I also understand that the real question involved here is how do we pay for these positions?

We all, I would guess, want the positions. But how do we pay for them? And that's the crux of the matter. If it were simply voting the articles for adding positions, that had nothing to do with how we pay for them, then I can see that we just go ahead and proceed and add the positions. But in fact, I believe that there is one way of coming to grips with a reconciliation, what I suspect will be two very intense positions about this. One is pay for the positions for the entire year, and the other is, we can't afford these positions, don't pay for them at all. And in wrestling with those two particular extremes, I tried to

figure out a way that we might be able to reconcile those two. One, because we accept or if you don't, don't vote for it. That we accept the legitimacy of the request for the positions. But to also accept that this year is a particular budget crunch.

As a consequence, I would offer a proposed amendment to this article or this motion, and I will offer similar amendments to the following two articles. And that would be that the position approvals are affective as of April 1st, 2007. April 1st, 2007. That essentially means that the actual hiring of people into these positions would be deferred for nine months of the fiscal year.

I again asked Jill Bishop to do some calculations about how this would impact the actual cost of the positions, and I would certainly invite her to speak specifically about this, but I can tell you that if the positions, all five of them, the two firefighter, two police and one library position, are deferred, then the actual savings would be on the order of \$210,000 for the salary and for the fringe benefits of those positions.

I have some other the comments under the budget article and would propose other ways of not spending or not appropriating funds that would require that debt exclusion stratagem. And it's that debt exclusion stratagem that I really oppose and object to. And so, under the budget article, I would offer those.

But at this point, it's a matter simply, and I guess I am the only one that is in a position, that are willing to speak about this, because none of us want to say, "No, we don't want firefighters." The fire chief is going to say, and as I said to him today, "You'll want to see them so we can save Beebe Woods, so we need two more firefighters." And the police chief would offer rational for it. And they are legitimate and I don't mean to contest those positions. I accept the judgments of the Selectmen and the Finance Committee and the departments who say they wish the positions. But in order to reconcile that with how do we

pay for them, and my opinion that we should not pay for them with the debt exclusion stratagem says to me that we fund the positions for one quarter of the year, and so that's the impact of my proposed amendment that says the effective date of the approval is April 1st, 2007. Thereby meaning that three-quarters of the salary would be saved for the fiscal year.

Yes, it would be in effect fully for the subsequent fiscal year and the new positions would be added, and that's a budget puzzle for the town to figure out for the coming year. But for this year, it would remain unfunded for the first 9 months.

Now, as a practical matter, I think it's clear, at least to me, that in fact for the firefighters and police officers, there will not be active firefighters and police officers on duty as of July 1, if they were funded. No, that is not what will happen. There are civil service lists to go through and, at best, the positions might be filled in - or appointments made in July or August, and then there are three months of training that would occur. So they would not be available in the busy summer months no matter what. They would have to undergo their three months training.

And so I would argue that, in fact, if we defer this until April 1st of 2007, that gives ample time to set the training schedule and roll the new officers in as close as you can come to an April 1st training program. I have no idea when they would be scheduled. But that they could be trained and available for start of active duty and full street duty or fire duty as of July 1st of the next year. And so I would propose that this amendment be added to the motion. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. We have an amendment on the floor to make this article effective April 1st, 2007. Discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Netto, did you want to speak on the amendment? Or do you want to wait until we go back to the main motion or --

okay. Mr. Netto. Okay.

Ms. McElroy on the amendment?

MS. MCELROY: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. McElroy.

MS. MCELROY: Margo McElroy, Precinct

1. Through you, Mr. Moderator, I would like to ask the chief how this is going to impact response time, particularly for rescue. Our aging population is impacting our fire department enormously in the rescue area far more than in the fire area, and this being public safety more than any other department in town, my inclination would be to get these people on line as quickly as possible; if they come on with the July 1 budget, that would put them on line by September 1st, probably. And whereas with the amendment, they would not be coming on line until the beginning of the following summer. And so how is -- is that going to impact response times to delay this and staffing at the maybe some of the outlying stations?

Is the chief here?

THE MODERATOR: Chief Brodeur?

MS. MCELROY: Through you, Mr.

Moderator?

THE MODERATOR: Microphone for the chief, please, unless you want to come up front. Okay.

CHIEF BRODEUR: Mr. Moderator, Paul

Brodeur, Precinct 4. Town Meeting Member, Fire Chief, AARP member in good standing.

[Laughter.]

CHIEF BRODEUR: Town Meeting Members -
Which question first, Margaret?

MS. MCELROY: How will it impact
response times and staffing?

CHIEF BRODEUR: Staffing, if we go over
to April of '07, that is when we can request a list for two positions.

April, May, June, by the time civil service gets through, it will be June, July that they're on board, and three months if we are fortunate enough to get them into the academy. So they should be considered personnel, man or woman power, by September of '07 or October of '07.

This is part of an eight person increase

in staffing in the Fire Department. This is the third grouping. If you recall, in 2004, we received two; in 2005, we received two firefighters, and this is an ongoing staffing proposal. This staffing proposal will eliminate our one person station, which is only one left which is in west Falmouth and it's taken us 30 years to do it. This year, with the two people that we were allocated on one July '06, has finally put two people full time with an ambulance, engine, and a brush truck in Woods Hole. Which is -- you say why is that important?

That is important for North Falmouth and East Falmouth because now the Woods Hole ambulance will become the center core's backup, which is approximately 50 to 55 percent of our business, is headquarters.

Ten January, 1980, the second ambulance went to East Falmouth. 1998, if you recall, the ambulance went to North Falmouth. 2006, Woods Hole. One station left with one person in it, that is West Falmouth. In 1976, the Fire Department had 95 call men. We have four today, soon to be three, due to age. Our mission is increasing and ever-involving. We're up to about 3500 rescue calls a year. We generate about \$1.2 million in revenue to the General Fund. The consolidation for Hatchville station and West Falmouth will be hopefully done by the year 2010. That's in a master plan that was established in 1997. The dichotomy that I have with this proposal in Article 13 is everybody knows we need the people. The issue is how do you pay for it?

I was told by my leaders, debt exclusion.

The Finance Committee's for it. Selectmen's for it. Here I am. I have a three and a half month canned program that I could give you which I'd give

you in synopsis of what I just gave you. We need the people. Our mission is changing. We are fortunate that we have the hospital in our community, not like other communities in the county that do not have the hospital. You say why is that important?

Quicker turn around with our ambulances to the hospital and be ready to respond again. There are times presently in this community four ambulances are out at the same hour. Why is that important?

Eight people out of ten are gone. That leaves two people to protect the town.

Cost is with the staffing program, our intent is to beef up the staffing. We have been taking incremental steps in order to do that with the blessing of Town Meeting and the voter. How that affects response time, it would be great to have 30 people on each shift. That isn't realistic. We look at things fiscally, also, before we come up with these improvements for staffing increases. But think about it.

Two surveys have been given to the town. One in the late 70's said that one person stations were criminal. In 1970, four stations were staffed with one person. We had a survey in '89. Fire Department specific, one person stations were criminal. At that time, it's still four stations with one person in it. Today we have one station with only one person on duty and that is West Falmouth. If I can't cover headquarters, West Falmouth moves and covers the void wherever that may be in town. Before we go out mutual aid, other communities are having the same problem.

So I think, to put it to the Town Meeting members is, do we wait until April? April will be September, October '07, or do you go with the debt exclusion? I don't want the Fire Rescue Department to be thought of as that we're not gracious and thankful for what the town has given us. Number 13 is a good number. Tom Brady says we're back. We are going to continue to come back because that is a fact of

life.

But we do have a plan. We don't have a plan that was made, put on a shelf and every now and then dusted off. Hatchville station isn't a surprise. That's in the mix. Fiscally managing the Fire Department would be a consolidation because a majority of West Falmouth is taking care of Buzzards Bay and Cleveland Light. And we are having an increase in building and development on the east side of the double barrel highway.

That's what have I to say. Any more questions?

THE MODERATOR: Okay -

CHIEF BRODEUR: Dan Shearer agrees. I really shake in my boots when I read a letter from Dan Shearer and we're in agreement.

[Laughter.]

CHIEF BRODEUR: He lives in West Falmouth, too.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. McManamon.

Microphone down here for Mr. McManamon. Carol, you're on my list. I've got a list that's developing, so if you want to have a seat.

MS. MARTIN: Can I - I think this is a point of order, Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, you've got a point of order?

MS. MARTIN: I'm not positive, but I think it might be. I think it's a big mistake to be tying anything having to do with personnel funding salaries to a debt exclusion as -

THE MODERATOR: That's not a point of order.

MS. MARTIN: Wait a minute. As debt exclusion cannot be -- is not -- cannot be used to fund -- any kind of

debt cannot be used -

THE MODERATOR: Okay, I will let you talk about that when I give you the turn to speak. A point of order means I am doing something wrong with the procedure of the meeting, and I don't believe I am doing anything wrong yet.

Mr. McManamon.

MR. MCMANAMON: Tom McManamon, Precinct

2. I stand because I couldn't stand in October. I was carried out by fire rescue personnel, and thank God they were there. I had 150 stitches. I severed an artery. And these people virtually saved my life, and I mean that with all sincerity. And I know Chief Brodeur is very sincere when he says he needs extra help. And I will back extra help for fire, police, anything that keeps our community as strong as it is. And I congratulate the chief for bringing this article forward and Chief Cusolito on the later article. And I hope everybody will vote for it because I would hate to see anybody end up in the same situation I was at that time. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer. You can use that one right there. This is on the amendment to make this effective April 1st. Mr. Latimer.

MR. LATIMER: Richard Latimer, Precinct

5. Chief Brodeur has spoken quite eloquently about the need for the Fire Department. I am here to suggest also that the needs of the Police Department and the library are equally valid. That the Finance Committee is typically very diligent in looking at our ability to pay for things, and when they say we can pay for something, I'm going to believe them. There is always second-guessing going on, and I'm not going to speculate as to why that might be. But I do want to express confidence in the Finance Committee in their approval of these three spending articles; that all three, including the library staffing, are much needed given the rate of the development in this town and the increased demands on all of these services.

I would say that if anybody has any technical objection as to the legality of the debt exclusion process, I would refer that as a legal question to town counsel, and I'd suggest that if there is a legal issue there, that I would request that town counsel address it, because I'm certainly not in any position to talk about legalities and I don't think any of us out here are, either. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. We are not funding these in this article, we're going to create them. We will talk about funding when we get to the budget.

Mr. Murphy. And then Ms. Martin.

CHAIRMAN MURPHY: Yes, Town Meeting Members. I would just like to bring up a couple issues that the Board of Selectmen discussed when we voted these positions. One is that this is year three on a four year staffing plan. Their five year staffing plan took into account that we needed to add eight firefighters. We did not do so all at once. We added two two years ago, two last year, two this year and have projected to add two more to get to an adequate staffing level for a community of our size.

The Board just recently, when we approved these firefighters, did acknowledge that if we don't have the money, we won't fund the positions. But we do need to get the positions authorized by this body. If in fact this body doesn't support the budget, and the money is not there, the town will have to make some cuts, and these positions undoubtedly will be scrutinize and probably would not be added as quickly and probably more to the tune of what Mr. Boyer is speaking of. But these are things that we have thought -- that this Board of Selectmen that gone through a thought process of. It's in our five year staffing plan. This was not a knee jerk reaction and we ask your support on this. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Ms. Martin, did you want the floor again? Microphone down here. And then Mr. Netto.

MS. MARTIN: Carol Martin, Precinct 6. I

was just - I just wanted the Town Meeting to know that we should not be trying anything to do with borrowing when it comes to funding positions.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, we are not doing that here. We are just creating the positions on paper.

MS. MARTIN: I understand that. But the discussion was and I wanted Town Meeting to be clear that we cannot borrow money to fund positions, except in the case of an emergency declared by the Selectmen.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. And we are not trying to do that in the budget, either. We're going to do it for the water towers but.

Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Joe Netto, Precinct 9.

Question -- that I think Mr. Murphy alluded to the answer -- that I was going to ask. If we do -- and I am for these positions. It becomes tough when you see a warrant booklet in front of you and this is going to be hard to not carry over to Article 11 because I too have an amendment for Article 11. That we are told as before we come here and as we are here we're going to hear all the time that we don't have the funds available to run the town and therefore we're going to have a debt exclusion. And I find it surprising that in this warrant we have the creation of five new positions. Again, not saying that the positions are not needed. I'm in agreement with Chief Brodeur. And Chief Cusolito, whatever he says, we're going to support. I think we feel that way. But we have a sense of fiscal responsibility and I think that that's what the speakers that we are going to hear from, you know, have to say.

Therefore, my question to the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen: if the debt exclusion does not pass on the vote in May, what is the status of these positions that we are going to vote on now?

CHAIRMAN MURPHY: Was that to me, Joe?

MR. NETTO: Yes, excuse me, the Chairman

of the Board of Selectmen, I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN MURPHY: Okay. The Board

itself will act as a body. No individual one of us will act, but we would -- we have spoken about this and that we will come to cut the budget and that in fact our original recommendation was that our portion of the debt exclusion would be to eliminate those positions. The Finance Committee, from what I understand, did not like that part to be eliminated. But as it stood, the Administrator's recommendation would be if the debt exclusion were not to have passed, that those positions would not be funded at this time.

MR. NETTO: Then the second question I have is: if that's the case, and the finances being the way they are, why weren't these articles -- I know we need the people -- but why weren't these articles put off until the Fall Town Meeting where we have the money from the state, we know what our finances are and we use the Fall Town Meeting as a capital expenditure?

And I think we have to look at the funding of positions the same as buying, somewhat of buying equipment. If we don't have a balanced budget -- and again I'm alluding to Article 11 so I'll stop there. But why didn't we wait, and I think the Town Administrator has the answer for me. Why didn't we put this in the Fall Town Meeting? That's my second question. When we know absolutely, positively our bottom line. Mr. Whritenour.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: The funding for these positions cannot be held off until the Fall Town Meeting because that's after the tax rate has been set. So, what needs to be done, and I think also it's extremely unfortunate with the first speaker making amendments to articles that simply create the positions in our classification plan -- that that's the first step.

Now, we know the Board of Selectmen has

the five year staffing plan that identifies these public safety positions as the highest priority in the town. It's also backed up by reams and reams of data from both of the chiefs for both of the public safety departments that the positions are needed. I think to rush to some type of peremptory judgment on the Town's budget, which is under Article 11, to interfere with just the creation of these positions in the classification plan is wrong.

I think what we would like to have is the opportunity that we've got a clear consensus on a direction for the budget that is responsible, and I think that this body is well capable of deciding upon it. We would like a chance to at least create the positions in the classification plan because we know that there is a priority for those that have been identified by all of the boards. Then, when we get to Article 11, that's the time. I'm being withheld, here. We can't discuss the details of budget, and I'd like to have a chance to discuss that and then, you know, if this body is not comfortable that we've got a responsible program for funding these, you know, then they won't come through.

But the key thing is, the budget is tied also to the approval at the ballot in May, and that is the one chief part of the consensus among the policy boards, is that if that vote doesn't come through, that the boards will be back together and we have to do this before November. November would be too late. If there is any items that can't be funded in the budget, those cuts will be made and there will be a balanced budget, make no mistake about that. But, because of the timing of the financial cycle, the first step is to create the positions, in the classification plan. The second step is to fund them and then it's not until after that that we'd even move toward filling them.

MR. NETTO: So, well, thank you very much, then. So we see that the funding has to be there before the positions. We are just creating the positions.

So I think then, in regard, then, that Mr. Boyer's amendment would not be needed, then. Thank you very much. I

think his amendment was good because we got the discussion and the matter is out in the open and it's clear. So, thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Lichtenstein. The microphone over here in the center.

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: Lesley Lichtenstein, Precinct 8.

THE MODERATOR: Let's get the mic first.

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: I have a question. I am sorry. I don't know if it's just me, but what I notice is that there is no question that we need the police. There is no question that we need the fire. But this is almost like blackmail. What has happened here is we're saying, "Okay, we need these positions, but if we don't fund the budget we won't get them." My question, through you, Mr. Moderator, to the Board of Selectmen is, why isn't there somewhere else that we can make cuts? Why do we have to be put on that it has to be public safety?

There is nowhere else in the budget that we can make cuts?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: I think, quite honestly, what we are trying to do right now is we know that these positions are priorities for the town. They are identified completely in the plans. What we would like to do is first create the positions in the classification plan and then, on the funding, we'd like to do that under the budget because there is a lot of issues that need to be talked through and I think that that's the time to do it and, you know, I think that you'll get a better sense of the budget when we do the budget.

So, I think it's a good thing to first address creating the positions; then we'll attempt to fund them.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Valiela's next. I just want to mention that if we do have to go back after this Town Meeting and have some cuts, those cuts are going to be subject to approval of a

future town meeting. So, it will come before this body. We have to approve the budget in its final form even if there are cuts to be made, you know, depending on what happens in Article 11.

But, Ms. Valiela.

MS. VALIELA: That's true. Virginia Valiela, Precinct 5. Board of Selectmen, but speaking as an individual. If we had left the articles in the order in which they were, there would have been discussion of the budget. The whole matter of how to make ends meet, how to deal with a debt exclusion, and the funding would have been at that point.

There is a general feeling that these positions are needed. It's a question of timing and it's particularly a question of funding. By taking them out of order, we are having to sort of quietly grapple with the larger picture, which is the funding picture. And if they'd been left in the same order, we would have done that in, it seems to me, in a more logical process. I don't know whether a motion to table is appropriate, but that would give us a chance to discuss the budget and then come back to these positions.

I do want to say personally that I can't in good conscious approve a position at this time unless we definitely have agreement on how to fund it. Normally, if you have trouble paying your electric lights and your heating, you don't create new positions. You don't add to your house and create additional costs. So I really think the town should be discussing and deciding where is our consensus on how to fund our budget before we start adding additional positions. That's my personal statement.

THE MODERATOR: Do you want to take a vote on laying it on the table?

MS. VALIELA: I'm going to suggest just so the Town Meeting has an option that we motion to table and we actually take these up in their appropriate order so we can get to the presentation

that Mr. Whritenour has developed about how we are going to fund this budget. As it is now, these five positions are in that budget. That's \$250,000 out of the \$630,000 exclusion that is being considered.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, the motion to table requires two-thirds vote and is non-debatable.

Do you have a point of order or? Otherwise, we'll just vote to see whether or not you want to table; if not, we'll continue.

FROM THE FLOOR: We have an amendment on the floor, Mr. Moderator.

THE MODERATOR: Tabling will table the motion on the floor and any subsidiary motion. So the main motion and any amendment would both be tabled if the two-thirds passes.

So the question will come by a two-thirds vote whether or not to table this article and then we'd have to have another motion to table all the other ones that we were taking out of order. So the question will come on tabling Article 13. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, no.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: All those in favor of tabling signify by standing and the tellers will return a count. This requires two-thirds.

Division 1.

MS. TASHIRO: 20.

THE MODERATOR: 20.

Division 2.

MR. DUFRESNE: 65.

THE MODERATOR: 65.

Division 3.

MR. HAMPSON: 40.

THE MODERATOR: 40.

All those opposed to tabling signify by standing and the tellers will return a count.

Division 3.

MR. HAMPSON: 21.

THE MODERATOR: 21.

Division 2.

MR. DUFRESNE: 30.

THE MODERATOR: 30.

Division 1.

MS. TASHIRO: 39.

THE MODERATOR: 39.

By a counted vote of 125 in favor and 90 opposed, there is not a two-thirds and we will continue discussion on the amendment to Article 13. Ms. Valiela, any further discussion?

MS. VALIELA: No, I'm fine, thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Dufresne, you were

next on my list. Do you still? I know it was a while back.

MR. DUFRESNE: I was not going to speak on this subject, but I will speak as a representative of Precinct 2. I think there were a couple of strong cases made here tonight. One by the fire chief and one by our previous administrator, Mr. Boyer. We all understand the need for the -- in the Capital Plan for adding public safety staff.

When the Finance Committee discussed this, believe me, it was not an easy discussion. There was three votes of six to five. We talked on it about an hour and 15 minutes. And one of the reasons we came to the conclusion that we would support the Selectmen in their request for the debt exclusion so that we could come to Town Meeting and present it to you in a way that if we want the town to function, this is

probably the only mechanism to do it for this year because we are faced with a very, very serious short-fall. And at the very last vote, we did not support the debt exclusion. It was a six to five vote. The 6 to 5 vote went around the table and -

FROM THE FLOOR: Point of order.

THE MODERATOR: Yes, Mr. Dufresne, I am getting some points of order that we're going sort of off.

MR. DUFRESNE: Oh, I'm sorry.

THE MODERATOR: Maybe more into the budget.

MR. DUFRESNE: Okay.

THE MODERATOR: Discussion on whether to make this entire article contingent or excuse me, effective April 1, 2007. Let's get that out of the way and then we will talk about the main motion and we will move from there.

Mr. Crocker was next on my original list.

MR. CROCKER: Mr. Moderator, ladies and gentlemen and members of the Town Meeting. I am Harold Crocker, Precinct 3. I have been in this Town Meeting many years, quite a few years, and I've watched what's gone on over the years. Sometimes we put articles like this on the table and then we gotta play a catch up game.

As you know, every year goes by and we don't get these men to do this work, we have to pay double. Now, we are asking for two more firemen to get -- go through the training and be on duty. I want to be in my house comfortably, knowing that the Falmouth Rescue will be there. If a man is sick and he can't come into duty, there is another man behind that, that will be at my house. We had a gentleman tonight over here mention that they saved their lives. I don't believe that we have to worry about what is going to happen of up and coming.

A lot of you people know me in the town. I've lived here all my life. What I'm trying to get at is that we go out

and we buy recreation. We want this, we want that and everything else. But remember one thing: a life is a life. And if we want to save a life, we have to have the equipment there on time and we got a good fire chief and we got a good police chief. Let's try to help them out. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Shearer.

Can we get a microphone down here on the right for Mr. Shearer? It's coming, Dan.

MR. SHEARER: Dan Shearer, Precinct 6. I am sorry if I make the fire chief shiver. I'm upset about that.

[Laughter.]

MR. SHEARER: I am all for having these firemen. I think it's something we need. I think we have to afford it some way. But I think voting tonight this amendment that gives us a little bit of time is worthwhile and it might alleviate somewhat having this debt exclusion, and we will have the positions then on the books. It's there. We know when it's going to happen, and I'd ask you all to vote for this amendment. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Any further discussion on the amendment? Ms. McElroy, Mr. Marks.

MS. MCELROY: I would recommend that we support these public safety positions and vote against this amendment. There has been plenty of precedent seen, showing us the discretion of the Selectmen in manipulating the time frame of things appropriated by Town Meeting. There are also a large number of budget line items that I've been adding up other expenses that if we knock a small percentage out of each department, we can pay for these without going into questionable manipulations with debt. Public safety is the priority as everyone has agreed and this amendment is -- puts at risk these positions that are critical. We should vote down this amendment. Create the positions. And then deal with the funding for them. And the Selectmen have always had the discretion and have certainly used it in the past to manipulate the time

frame.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Marks. In the back.

MR. MARKS: Ed Marks, Precinct 3. Ladies and gentlemen. I rise to support this Article 13, and 14. It's no different what this Town Meeting did years ago. You voted two positions in the DPW, they're still on the books. We haven't funded them. If the debt exclusion doesn't go through, the Selectmen don't have to fund these positions. But at least we show good faith for the fire chief and police chief that we are supporting.

I'm going to give you one little incident about the one man station. When I was in the Fire Department, we had a firefighter in North Falmouth. A box alarm came through. He tripped on the stairs, fell down and knocked himself out and never responded to the box alarm. So, these are the things that happen. So let's get behind these positions, vote them. If the debt exclusion doesn't go through, then at least they're on the books. Thank you.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Okay, the question will come on the amendment -- Do you want to talk about the amendment?

Okay. Microphone in the back.

MR. DEWITT: This is actually a question of order, Mr. Moderator. Is Mr. Boyer's amendment within the scope of the article which is simply to amend the classification plan of the town? His intent is really a budgetary question which would fall within Article 11 --

THE MODERATOR: [Inaudible] -- that he is going to get is that the amendment to the classification plan wouldn't happen until April 1st. You're right. The budget issues will be decided in the budget. But the plan itself will not be amended if this passes until April 1st. So you couldn't pay for a position that didn't exist before April 1st.

Okay. Any further discussion on the

amendment?

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.

Now the question will come on the main
motion, Article 13 as printed to delete 48 firefighter paramedics and to add
50 firefighter paramedics to the Town's Position Classification Plan. All
those in favor of the main motion signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it by a majority.

Article 14. This is to see if the Town
will vote to amend the Classification Plan to delete 52 patrol officers and
to add 54.

Madame Chairman for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I move
Article 14 as printed.

THE MODERATOR: As printed. This was
held by Mr. Boyer. Mr. Boyer? Has no comment.

Okay, as printed. Any further
discussion on Article 14? Hearing none, the question will come on the main
motion. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it by a

majority.

Article 15. This is to add a technical support librarian of Grade 10 to the Town's Classification Plan.

Madam Chairman for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, I move Article 15 as printed.

THE MODERATOR: As printed. This was held by Mr. Boyer. No. Okay. Any further discussion?

Mrs. Tashiro.

MRS. TASHIRO: Mr. Moderator, Town

Meeting Members, Charlotte Tashiro, Precinct 4. I notice that this is listed as a new position. It is currently being funded by state funds. I would like to make a motion that we put this position off at this time since it is not currently being funded by the town and let it go until a future date, also.

If it should pass, if this article should pass, I would like to see this position listed as a new position and people will be able to apply for the position openly. It should not -- in other words, it should not be grandfathered as it is.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, so the amendment to this article is? I am a little confused. I know you wanted it to wait later if it fails.

MRS. TASHIRO: Well, that would be an amendment, so I'll wait and make that later if you want me to, or I can make it now. Whichever pleases you.

THE MODERATOR: Well, after we vote yes or no on creating it, we're going to go back to the Article 11. So, if you want to make an amendment, you should make it now.

MRS. TASHIRO: To the effect that it's a new position and should be openly --

THE MODERATOR: This is a new -- in the

Classification plan, it will be considered new. It will be added to the existing --

MRS. TASHIRO: And will be openly advertised?

THE MODERATOR: That's a question that I can't answer.

Ms. Zacks, can you answer that question? From the Library Trustees? With the microphone, please. With the microphone, please, Ms. Zacks.

MS. ZACKS: Through you, Mr. Moderator, I would like to introduce the Director of the Library who will address the specifics of this question. I think that her information will then help make for an informed decision.

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

MS. ZACKS: I'd like to introduce Leslie Morrissey, please.

MS. MORRISSEY: Good evening. To answer the question that you had is, yes, the position will be open and will be advertised and filled by the most qualified person.

The position of Information Systems Librarian has been in the town's pipeline since 2002. And now, four years later, it has really reached the critical point for the library.

The Falmouth Public Library has three networks, a wireless system, 32 staff computers, 38 printers, and 33 computers for public use located in 3 buildings. In addition, the library has a computerized telephone system and multiple routers in-house. The library has a highly interactive website. It provides links to other popular websites, to 24-7 live reference accessibility and to the CLAMS network. To keep the website viable and of use to the public, it requires frequent updates.

If our computer system fails for even a

short period of time, the library is literally dead in the water. Failure means an interruption in our ability to deliver services to the public as well as to operate internally. Literally, all our functions: cataloging, acquisitions, circulation, reference, interlibrary loan and administration, rely upon functioning computers. As a matter of fact, when I walked in this morning my computer had crashed, and I had to call on somebody immediately to come and fix it so I could finish my preparations for Town Meeting Tonight.

The Town's IT Department is wonderful, and has helped us out in several instances, most recently in helping us set up our wireless system, and they also completed other projects of a broad scope. But, they are very busy and they cannot drop other projects to provide immediate service to the libraries. While the library shares common software and hardware with other Town departments, the library is unique in many ways. It is open 7 days a week, for a total of 103 cumulative hours in the three buildings. It provides access to informational databases, to the Internet and to the CLAMS catalog, as well as to the catalogs of Massachusetts libraries, to e-mail, and to off-line processing for the public. These are critical functions for the library and are part of the library's basic mission.

What makes us very different from other town departments is that the public has access to our PC's. This access, as you can well imagine, creates many unique problems that require immediate attention. The library's dependence on electronic technology is destined to grow. It is our mission to meet the needs of the public for accurate information and to provide access to electronic information that they may not be able to otherwise afford. An onsite technical support librarian is critical to this mission. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Further discussion on Article 15? Can we get a microphone down front here for Ms. Grant?

MS. GRANT-MAJOR: Lynn Grant-Major,

Precinct 5. Speaking as the Director of IT for the Town. You just can't think of this as a new position because this person or this job has been done for a long, long time, and it's very specific to all of their software. And although my staff is there as much as they can to help, it's really the learning curve of knowing all their pieces of software and all their networks. It really does require someone to be there. I would think it's one of their most important positions.

So, I think you have to think of it as an ongoing position that somehow just lost its funding. I know it's hard to compete with police and fire, but it really is an important job, and if it doesn't get funded, then my staff, who is already kind of stressed out, would have to be there even more. But, so I hope you support this. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Any further discussion of Article 15? Hearing none, the question will come on the main motion as printed. All those in favor, signify by saying, Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The Ayes have it by a majority.

Article 11. We're going to go back to the budget. We'll get a main motion on the floor. Then we'll start going. We'll have a presentation and we'll do department by department. We won't have holds. We'll just actually discuss it and do what we want with each department. And right around the nine o'clock hour I'm going to put us into recess so we can go down for a break, and then we'll come back and continue if we haven't, which I suspect, completed it by then.

Madame Chairman for the main motion.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Mr. Moderator, Town Meeting Members, please bear with me, our Town Counsel has informed me I must read this.

I move Fiscal Year 2007's operating budget as follows:

A. Appropriate from the Parking Meter Fund to be applied to budget 01210, \$75,000.

B. Appropriate from embarkation fees to budget 01201-51110, Police Department salaries, \$200,000; to budget 01220-51110, Fire Department salaries, \$133,196.

C. Appropriate from various School Department accounts, from the Lawrence School fund \$100,000. Oops, sorry. From the Lawrence School to budget 01300-51110, School Department salaries, \$100,000.

D. Appropriate from Wetlands Fund to be applied to budget 01171, \$30,000.

E. Appropriate from Waterways Funds -- to be appropriated, Waterways funds to be applied to budget 01295, \$35,000.

F. Appropriate from golf revenues for principal and interest payments, \$372,443.

G. Appropriate from Community Preservation Fund for principal and interest payments \$2,133,810.

H. Appropriate from Stabilization Fund to be applied to the Fiscal Year 2007 Operating Budget, \$250,000.

I. Transfer from Certified Free Cash to be applied to the Fiscal Year 2007 Operating Budget, \$700,000.

J. Raise and appropriate under the estimated Fiscal Year '07 levy limit and apply to all other remaining balances under Article 11, \$91,086,621.

For a total operating budget of \$95,116,070.

And further, that the town request that the Board of Selectmen place a debt exclusion question on the May, 2006 Annual Town Election Ballot to exclude from the provision of Proposition two and a half, so-called, the amount necessary to pay for the bonds issued for construction of the water tanks authorized by Article 40 of the April, 1999

Annual Town Meeting.

For the several purposes designated in the budget, and that the same shall be expended only for such purposes under the respective Officer, Board and Committee of the Town.

Capital Outlay and Special Project appropriations are to be expended for items specifically listed in the Departmental Budget and no other purpose.

THE MODERATOR: Madame Chairman, the Community Preservation Fund requires the language recommended by the Community Preservation Committee in its meeting of March 23rd, 2006. So could we just add that in there, to the main motion? So, under G, the appropriation for the Community Preservation Fund, just so we meet their legal requirements, we're going to add: as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee at its meeting of March 23rd, 2006.

Mr. Boyer says that's good. Okay.

Okay, there's the main motion.

Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: Thank you. It's opening day, today. And budget night. We won, by the way. If anyone didn't see the game this afternoon.

If we can go to the first slide, there.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. It's very clear, I think, from the discussion we've already had this evening, that the budget decisions this spring are going to have a great impact on the town services. And we've been talking about this since 2004. And this year, we are at a critical crossroads in the town's financial future, and I think after having studied this issue since 2004, that we are prepared to make some decisions this evening. And what I would like to do is just, you know, I could talk about the budget for hours and hours, but what I want to try to do is to just take you through some of the key decisions that related to the budget process this year. Where we stand in the big picture of town

finances and what the direction is moving forward.

And the key thing, and you've heard me give this essential presentation before. Again, none of this should come as any surprise. We've been talking about these issues since 2004 and the key thing is that the town has absolutely struggled financially since Fiscal Year 2004, that we lost the equivalent among a number of programs as a result of we were in a statewide fiscal crisis at that time, and the total amount that we lost was \$2 million. At that time, if you recall, to deal with that \$2 million loss, we had to schedule a Special Town Meeting in September of 2004. We cut directly from the budget \$1.5 million and we had hoped that in the subsequent years, 2005, 2006, the economy would come around and that, hopefully, some of those funds would be restored.

But, unfortunately since 2004, we have had a fairly slow economic growth statewide in our region and we've been, since that time, right up against the Proposition two and a half levy limit, that have prevented replacing these funds in our budget. And, I just want to make no mistake about it, I mean, that's the key thing, was, since we lost these funds in the budget, and the budgets were fairly tight when we did lose the funds, it's had a looming budget shortfall that's followed the Town. And each year, we've tried to deal with that. Each year we tried to make the cutbacks. Those funds have never been restored from the levels that they were in 2003.

And essentially that's the financial issue that we have right now. And if you look at the numbers that we are talking about, are very much marginal in a \$95 million budget. What we are trying to deal with is not a situation where there is enormous shortfalls, but very small shortfalls in the, you know, half a percent range of the town's budget that have created problems for us moving forward. And they are still there.

Now, all of the budget debate -- and we've seen it and everyone here in this room has participated in this, and I

think we really had the peek last year at this time in front of town meeting when we had an override attempt that was requested by the School Department and the town's officials weren't able to reach a consensus on it and, as a result, that override failed. And although the reductions were made in the school budget at that time, I think some grave reservations have existed in the ability of the School Department, and frankly some of the other departments, to keep moving and putting forward that high quality level of services with the funding limits under Prop 2 ½. And I think it was that budget debate and the lack of a clear consensus and direction from all of the policy leaders in the town -- and I include myself in that -- that led us since that April. And it started immediately with the Board of Selectmen's strategic planning workshop in June, to establish as a high priority in this town dealing with the town's finances, to rolling up our sleeves and working together with that, and to develop a consensus.

And I think each of the boards, the Selectmen, the Finance Committee and the School Committee, have devoted themselves to working I think a little harder in the budget this year and reaching a consensus on what the budget process was going to be this year, how are we going to address the looming shortfalls that have been following us since 2004 and what the best, most balanced sort of conservative way that would be available to move forward to Fiscal Year 2007.

Actually, I'm very happy to report to you that after almost a year of this work, that we've engaged in a process and developed an ongoing consensus to move some of the things forward. And I want to kind of present, again, some of the key points of the decision-making process there.

Now, starting with the loss of that two million in state aid, you know, that didn't slow down the need for some of the departments. When we put together -- and this goes back, you know, very, very early in the fall and late summer, based on our initial budget estimates, there was an estimated shortfall in the

budget of \$1.2 million. That's just to maintain the current service levels. Now, the first thing, there's a multi-part strategy that we've employed to try to put the town's financial health in good shape. And the first thing is to involve every one the town departments in a sense of team work to take a close look at that budget. And I've got the list of the reductions that we made. We analyzed every single area of our operations, tried to streamline things where possible. Cut back any expense accounts. You know, we did things like consolidating all of the building maintenance together under one account so that we can get things taken care of a little bit more efficiently. And with this team work, what we were able to do is to analyze the priorities that were established by the Board of Selectmen, by the town departments, those public safety staffing positions, include those in the department with a series of cuts to make things more efficient and still be able to cut that shortfall to just over \$600,000. And, again, that's just a little more than half a percent of the budget.

But I think what you're going to find is it's an extremely important \$600,000, in that that was the point where, in looking after several rounds of cutting the budgets, that I think all of the boards agree that any further cuts in the town's budget as we proposed it, what you have in front of you is a bare bones budget. We've trimmed back certain things so that we can meet only those highest priority items, which are the two public safety staffing positions and that library tech position are the only new initiatives, really, in the budget at all. Over a budget that large, it's really uncanny.

We can move it along now. And the thing that I want to tell you is that, having gone through and with the scrutiny I think of the Finance Committee, who was right there with the rounds of cuts, trying to put in those priorities but stopping where we were at the point of damaging local services, that we felt that the town wouldn't appreciate going in and dismantling some of the things that we fought hard to build.

We looked at a series, a wide range of alternatives, dispassionately and coldly on how best to move the town forward so that we can keep the services but also try to, you know, deal with that shortfall.

And I just want to let you know that we talked a great deal about making those further cuts, whether it was a wise idea in the long term to cut that extra \$600,000. We looked again at the fees and charges of the individual departments. And remember, our fees just two years ago did undergo a moderation process, and it was felt that the fees were doing their job, that it wasn't something that we could just, you know, raise fees again. We looked at a Proposition two and a half override as a likely scenario to replace the 600,000, but we also looked at the debt that we currently have in the town's budget that's been placed underneath the Proposition two and a half cap. And, while at the time it was a wise idea to do that because of the loss of the other revenues that we had from the state, because of the growth in the town's budgets, what we found was that that debt inside Proposition two and a half had come to the point where it was actively competing under the Prop two and a half cap, with some other critical local services, like education, like fire, like police.

But the key point, in this analysis, of the various options and alternatives -- and I don't believe that there are other alternatives to either having more cuts, fees and charges, the Prop two and a half override or looking at the structure of the debt. I think we covered pretty much the gamut of reasonable alternatives to address the finances. There is a critical principal that all of the boards reached, and it's a key point that I just want to bring out to Town Meeting, and that consensus was that it is in the best interests of the town in the long run to replace a portion of those revenues that were lost in 2004. Not the entire amount of revenues, but a portion of those in order to meet the largest needs of the town.

Now, that really is the first key step in

the budget process, that simply making believe that the town didn't need that state aid and that we could continue happily with that \$2 million out of the budget; what we found is that that was not the case and we do have a need to replace some of those revenues. And, having made that decision, that a portion had to be put back in the budget, ultimately, after much discussion, it was decided that the debt exclusion method was the most reasonable and prudent method for achieving that. And I know it's something that we've never done in the town, although it's far from creative in the least, it bears a little discussion, and I want to talk to you just a little bit about how a debt exclusion was chosen and what some of the pros and cons with doing that are.

Now, analyzing the debt exclusion and just taking a look under a microscope a little bit, it's similar to a traditional override, but I think in our present circumstances it's preferable for several reasons and I want to bring out some of those reasons and show you in a way hopefully that will make a little sense just a couple of those reasons.

First of all, it limits the amount of new revenues to what the debt service amount is. And, in this case - and I want to show you in a little more detail -- it's approximately \$629,000 in the first year. Roughly one percent of the levy, a little over half a percent of the overall town budget. And it's conservative in that approach, is that it definitely has a topside limit to what it can cost taxpayers, and we will talk a little bit about that.

Another key reason why it's preferable to a traditional override is that, with an override, the funds under the available cap continue on and on. It's a permanent feature of your tax levy. With the debt exclusion, I want to show you how the tax rate impact starts at a certain amount but it declines down to zero. And maybe the best thing to do now is just to get a little bit closer of a microscope view of how a debt exclusion works and what it does for the tax levy.

First of all, I want to show you -- and

we'll talk about the selection of the water tank debt in a minute, but there is a declining debt service that is currently in place for the water tank project that was completed in the year 2001. And we're five years into funding that project. Up to now, it's been funded through the water rates. But what we are proposing to do is to shift this debt outside of underneath Proposition two and a half and place it on as a debt exclusion, and I want to show you what this chart represents.

It's not the entire debt for the project, but it's the remaining debt. We had years 2001, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are currently being paid for already, and those are really the highest years of the debt. The remaining 15, 16 years to the year 2022, you see the debt starts off at \$629,008 in Fiscal Year 2007, declines to 610,591,562, all the way down until you get into 2020, 375, then 110, 105, and, in 2023, it's zero, it's gone. The effect on the property taxes: 6 cents per thousand in the first year. Going down to, by 2022, it's only one cent on the tax rate and then it goes down to zero. That's what folks will be paying for this.

And, six cents on the tax rate, if your home is worth 350,000, to give you an example which is close to the median value of a home, that would be \$19.48 a year. If your home's a little bit more, a \$400,000 home, it jumps up to 20, maybe \$24 or so. And that amount per year declines just as the debt does: 19, 18, 17, 16, 15. And that gives you a sense of the structure, what that debt looks like.

But what it doesn't do, it doesn't answer the question as to, you know, we all understand an override, we talked about it last year and we decided we weren't ready. Why don't you just come back with an override? Why are you coming in with this debt exclusion proposal that it's difficult to kind of fathom? And I want to talk about that a little and I think the next slide sheds a little bit of light on that.

And if you bear with me for a second. I try not to put in too many slides like this, but this one is particularly important. The green area that's shaded is a graphical depiction and I

think it's nice to see it on a graph, of that chart that we just showed of, in 2007 we have 629,008 for the total amount of the debt exclusion. And that kind of shows the shape of the decline throughout and then it rapidly declines when we get into 2021, 2022. And then it's gone. It goes down to zero. That's the amount for the debt exclusion. That's the amount that the taxpayers pay for. This is the 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, zero.

What the dotted line represents is the

flexibility that we create underneath the Proposition two and a half levy limit cap by excluding this debt. If you bear with me for a second, what this chart shows is essentially it's a good way to compare the debt exclusion model versus an override model, and I think what it shows is why it's infinitely superior if you have the luxury of having debt underneath the Prop two and a half cap that you're capable of excluding; it shows why that's preferable, especially to your pocketbook, over an override.

Because, in the first year, the problem is we have \$629,000 worth of debt underneath the cap that's competing with the School Department, it's competing with police, it's competing with fire. Once we remove this \$629,000 from underneath the cap, the amount of flexibility for spending to allocate that amount that was previously the part of the Prop two and a half cap, the levy limit that was previously devoted to this debt, that amount is 629,000. Next year, it remains constant. Once that 629,000 is out, moving forward throughout all of these years, that 629,000 remains under the cap. That amount doesn't decline.

What declines is the requirement of how

much money each year has to be paid off. And that's a function of the amount of the debt service. So let's compare this for just a second to a traditional Prop two and a half override. And if I were showing you a Prop two and a half override, the way the chart looks is: you don't decline. The Prop two and a half override would be this dotted line, except that rather than the payments declining, it would be increasing by two and a half percent a year. That's the out of pocket expense. And the difference is,

for the purchasing power of that \$629,000 per year, the amount that the town doesn't have to pay under a debt exclusion that you would have to pay as taxpayers is illustrated by the gray area. All this shaded area in here is taxes that, if this was an override, these taxes would stay up at the 629 a year. But, because of the structure of the debt, we are able to maintain the purchasing power under the cap of 629 a year, but pay the declining debt. And all of this amount, it's hundreds of thousands of dollars in property tax money that folks won't have to pay.

So, if there's any question about just strictly from your own pocketbook standpoint, what is preferable, an override or the purchasing power that you get by excluding the debt with the declining amount, I think this chart puts that to bed. That if you have an opportunity to do a debt exclusion as opposed to a regular override, there is no way that you would ever want to pick the override. And I think that, through the discussion, that was a key point that came out. And I think that, you know, I can later answer any questions on this. But it's the reason, because it saves money financially, that it's better to go with a debt exclusion than the override amount.

Maybe we can just go to the next slide.

Now, again, another key concept, and you see how, you know, they build on one another if we know that there is a portion of that lost revenue that we have to replace. And I think through the scrutiny of the Finance Committee we pretty much determined it's just over that \$600,000 level to keep the town's services moving. We've compared all of the alternatives and we have gone through, you know, months and months of deliberation on this.

And, while it may seem counter-intuitive when you stack up the numbers, excluding debt rather than an override, if you agree that that is something that is preferable from a financial standpoint and from your pocketbooks, the next kind of building block in the puzzle is the fact that it's very natural to -- as we have selected that

water tank project for the exclusion. And we did have a choice. We won't come in, I don't think, with any other debt exclusions, but really it boils down to, you know, the Water Department in terms of the need for future capital budgets and modernization of our aging water infrastructure, really, was an area that we focused on, but there is another, you know, big project for water mains. But we selected the water tank project because a major component of the design of that project was to improve the water flow for fire protection throughout the community, as opposed to the water mains that really go just to the residential customers.

That fire flow and the fire protection is a benefit that extends far beyond just the users of the water system. It's a benefit that the entire town receives. And I think it's a very good argument that you can make that since the town as a whole receives this benefit, then the financing, it's very legitimate to spread that over the town through a debt exclusion that places it on a property tax. As opposed to just on the water rates.

And another reason for that is that this is enormously helpful for the Water Department because currently our water rates are facing continued pressure for new projects to improve the system. Since the water tanks were initially proposed to be placed on the water rates, there have been a large number of new projects, new modernizations that have moved forward in the Water Department that haven't been accompanied with new water increases. The result is we've lagged behind. If you do a full cost analysis of the Water Department, including all of their debt, the benefits, indirect costs, there's a shortfall there of approximately \$572,000 or so. But more important than that, we've got a long list that we're going to be moving ahead with for additional modernization projects for the Water Department for which we will need to have some additional water revenues. And I think that the idea of removing a little bit of the pressure on those water rates will enable us to strategically increase water rates in the future to complete some of these

new modernization projects without having us behind the eightball as we've been for many years, so that the water rates are always lagging the spending, and I think that this is the project to really do that on.

Okay. Just some -- by way of background, I want to give you, you know, some key considerations in this decision. A debt exclusion, just like an override -- and I think a lot of us are convinced that we are down to that right now. That we are trying to limit the amount to be as balanced and conservative for the voters as we can, but with the need to have that small amount of revenue to replace some of what we lost in 2006. Whatever option that we take, it's going to require voter approval as a ballot question in May. And we have a contingency plan, again that's been agreed to by the Finance Committee, Selectmen, School Committee. If those funds are not approved in May, the Town may be forced to conduct a special town meeting to reduce budgets this fall, similar to what done in 2004. And we have a plan for that in place if these funds don't come through.

It will be painful. There will be reductions in services. It's not absolutely clear that the public safety positions will be the ones that suffer, but they certainly will be on the block as well as some significant amounts of school spending. But make no mistake about it: there will be a balanced budget and the budget will not be out of balance. I think really what's at stake are the town services moving forward and whether we're going to be able to continue the priorities for education, continue the priorities for public safety, DPW, and the other Town departments.

Another thing that I want to point out is we have gone through and trimmed back these budgets tremendously. The budgets you see in front of you are far different than the budgets that we've reviewed for the past four or five months. I've heard it stated that maybe we can go in and trim back a little on all of these different budgets, but, you know, I want to tell you, even if -- even if those priority positions are cut, or other cuts are made in different budgets, budget cuts

might get us through limping FY '07, but, without some flexibility underneath that cap, budget shortfalls will remain with us next year, the budget shortfalls will remain with us next year, we'll be having the same discussion only we'll be a year behind in many of the initiatives that we are hoping to get things stabilized and move forward on, and a few things maybe to kind of get close to wrapping up.

The proposal that we have is not a one-stop shopping that is going to solve all of the town's financial problems forever. It's part of a conservative and balanced approach to hopefully build some stability into the Town's finances over the next two to three year period. And I think that, given our local economy, given the status of what is happening at the state level, I think that's all we want to do right now.

I have had discussions with some folks that have advocated an override as opposed to the debt exclusion in a larger amount that hopefully would fund us further into the future, and I've also had discussion with folks that say, "Well, let's just cut the budgets and not do anything." And I think both of those strategies are not the way to go in this particular situation. What we see happening -- and granted, that 629 in and of itself is not going to be the panacea. But with the cuts that we've made in the budget and this additional flexibility under the Prop two and a half cap, another key piece is we're working very closely with our legislative delegation and we've got tremendous leadership from Cape Cod and Senator Murray, with Matt Patrick working on education, and Representative Eric Turkington, there has been a tremendous amount of, I guess momentum that's built up for state aid reform, uncapped lottery money. And what our goal is is to not select just the property tax as bailing the Town out financially. We've already had a vote just this past week, for instance, to uncap the state lottery funds, which would provide an estimated \$300,000 in state revenues for the Town.

We're also hoping to gain some funds, although we can't rely on that for the Fiscal Year '07 budget. But

hopefully moving into '08, the Ed Reform numbers will come through and that will be some additional flexibility in the state aid. And I want to point out that it's part of our program to work with the flexibility from the debt exclusion, a little room under the cap to deal with the most immediate priorities, moving forward to stabilize the town's finances over the next three years and get by without that needed override if we're able to get some additional funds from the state aid. If that doesn't happen, we may be back to see you before then.

But the key thing is that I think that this proposal will allow us this additional time which we've already started with the Finance Committee having a longer term service level study to make some informed choices on any future revenue proposals which our program gears those decisions to coming right back before this body, and to not ask for something to solve the town's finances out to ten years. Let's stabilize things, get us moving forward on solid footing over the next two to three year period, and then we'll analyze what the state aid is, hopefully with the combination of those three things that I mentioned, that we'll be in a position that we may be able to avoid an override altogether. That's the best case scenario.

The worse case scenario is that we'll be back if the Ed Reform piece doesn't come through and the voters don't support us, in May we may be back for a special town meeting to trim the budgets. But the priorities have been established and I think that the best thing to do is to move forward with these now.

And just to kind of wrap things up, the '07 budget, again, it's a level service budget, very limited new initiatives. Many of the accounts have been trimmed back to limit the new spending. I would caution against additional cuts at this time that may impact the town services beyond what it is intended. I think some of the departments are here; they'll report to you. They are willing to go along with this budget, although they have, you know, some trepidation, they've

been cut back quite a bit. But I think that they can get it done. The department heads in this town have done a great job working with us throughout this budget in keeping services high with limited resources.

And finally, I do want to thank the leadership for their work. The Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and the School Committee, I've been extremely impressed by the way they've rolled up their sleeves and taken control of this process and, you know, I've been honored to be able to help them in it. I've just continually presented options and alternatives that have been selected among from these policy-making boards and I think the consensus that has been developed is unprecedented, and I think it shouldn't be lost on anyone that these boards are standing together.

And, you know, we all wish that we didn't have to ask the voters whether, through an override or a debt exclusion or one of these options, to replace a portion of those funds. No one looked forward to doing that, and quite frankly we tried not to do that. But what we came up with ultimately is the most conservative and balanced approach, and I hope I've shown that it is infinitely preferable to just a traditional override.

And again, that is just a basic overview and I think that, you know, we can take some questions up front.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. We are going to take a break and when we get back we'll hear from the chair of the Finance Committee, their take on the budget proposal.

We'll stand in recess for 20 minutes.

[RECESS.]

[TOWN MEETING RESUMED:]

THE MODERATOR: Town Meeting Members, please take your seats. We need to establish a quorum after the break.

Town Meeting Members, please take their seats. Let's go. Let's see if we can get the budget done by 11:00

o'clock.

During the opening announcements, I missed our traditional announcement at the opening of the first night of town meeting which is for the Falmouth Service Center. Since we know we will be here tomorrow night with a Special Town Meeting, we ask that you bring in some non-perishable items, and specifically peanut butter, jelly, spaghetti sauce and Progresso Soups, please, please, please. So that is what I have here. So, tomorrow night we'll have a collection in the lobby for the Falmouth Service Center.

Okay. Would all town meeting members present please stand for the establishment of the quorum.

Mrs. Tashiro.

MRS. TASHIRO: 57.

THE MODERATOR: 57.

Mr. Hampson.

MR. HAMPSON: 57.

THE MODERATOR: 57.

Mr. Dufresne.

MR. DUFRESNE: 96.

THE MODERATOR: 96. By a counted vote of 210, we have a quorum and the Town Meeting is back in session.

We'll pick up on Article 11, the budget. We just had a presentation from the Town Administrator. We will hear a presentation by the chair of the Finance Committee, then we'll open the floor to general questions before we go into the line item budget.

Madame Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Town Meeting Members, I want to bring you into the world of the Finance Committee for the last couple of months. I think you've gotten a pretty good dose of it already tonight, but I'm going to tell you what has been going on.

In January of this year, when we received

the budget from the Selectmen's office and from the Town Administrator, it included the debt exclusion and also the \$250,000 use of the Stabilization Fund. Neither of which the Finance Committee was very happy about in January. And I can't say we are very happy about either one of them right now. But we do recognize that they are needed this year.

We began reviewing the budget subcommittee by subcommittee and budget by budget as we always do. And we also did some work to find out whether using a debt exclusion to help this process was one, legal, because it had never been done in the Town of Falmouth, or, two, necessary.

I am going to tell you that the month of February was particularly tough because as we reviewed individual budgets, almost to a person when the subcommittees came back and reported to the Finance Committee, they reported that not only could they not find cuts to make in individual line items in these budgets, but that in several cases, primarily with the larger departments, a number of the line items related to things like electricity, gasoline, natural gas, chemicals, maintenance of vehicles, maintenance of equipment, bridge and road maintenance, bike path maintenance, traffic light maintenance, sidewalk maintenance, were all underfunded in our opinion as a group for next year.

I need that to sink in. We not only couldn't make cuts, we would have rather as a Finance Committee added to some of these lines and line items. The town department heads were individually terrific about saying they are going to toe the party line, not ask for increases that they even thought in some cases they were going to need before the end of 2007, and they were going to try to make do with the amounts that the administrator had recommended.

Our conclusion at the end of reviewing the individual budgets were that these budgets really are bare-bones budgets. The best evidence or proof of that is the fact that we've watched the Certified Free Cash drop down from \$4.5 million two years ago, in

October, to probably what will be something below -- just below \$2 million in October of this year. Those monies actually represent kind of what goes back to the General Fund in unspent monies out of the 2006 budget.

So we already know the budgets are really tight. And we couldn't make any more cuts. Some of the things that we considered to cover -- to cover our options: we considered increasing the Reserve Fund for next year. I don't even think our Administrator knows we considered that one. I'd never mentioned it to him for sure because it would have added to the budget and not reduced it. And we really think that you could be looking at some shortfalls that add up to more than \$325,000 by the end of next year.

One of the other things we considered was adding a second debt exclusion for another amount of money to eliminate the reliance on the Stabilization Fund. We very quickly eliminated that possibility when I found out that, legally, we would have to -- we couldn't put it all on the ballot as one debt exclusion for one large amount; that it has to be done by individual projects, and we didn't want to complicate the ballot by adding a second debt exclusion when that wasn't what was recommended and came out of our town government.

We also considered an override, both for the \$629,000 and for the \$629,000 plus the 250 in the Stabilization Fund, to eliminate the reliance on that. And really the conclusion we came to was that an override isn't appropriate at this time. It's not what the town departments - it's not what our Town Administrator is telling us we need. We are probably going to need to rely on one sometime in the future if the state aid is not increased, at least back to its former levels, and if The Lottery aid doesn't get increased next year. All of those things are things that when I talked to the Selectmen and the Town Administrator they see as viable partial solutions to the problem.

Finance Committee members don't attend a lot of meetings with your government officials like Teresa Murray and so we

don't have that perspective, and we're less likely as a Finance Committee to believe that those sources of funds are going to be available in a couple of years.

But the bottom line is, by March, we were as confused as you are tonight with what we do. We had approved all the budgets. We took our first vote on the debt exclusion, and as Andy told you earlier tonight, it was negative, 6 to 5. Some of the -- and I don't want you to get the impression that it was all because we wanted the budget cuts. A couple of the people wanted the budget just to be cut that \$629,000 even though we'd already reviewed all the budgets and couldn't find any cuts. Some of the people wanted to call it an override because that's really what they see it as. And some of the people wanted to do a town-wide override for bigger dollars, which I think is what Finance Committee thought was going to happen this year.

After we made our recommendation not to approve the override last year, we anticipated, I think, a more comprehensive plan coming before us this year and it's just too soon to put that on the floor in front of you.

So we took a second vote later that night and voted in favor of the debt exclusion 8 to 2, recognizing, one, our inability to find what we would cut from the budget and, two, our common sense that none of us as business people would give our managers extra cash above and beyond what they asked for for a project or to run our businesses. And, third, kind of a fairness to all departments because we really didn't know where the cuts could come from.

We voted for the debt exclusion, knowing and with the agreement with both the Selectmen and the Town Administrator telling us several times and we'll make the same commitment to you that if the town doesn't go for it in May, we all promise, the three groups plus I'm sure the School Department because they're aware they are part of the package, all promise to come back and make the cuts that will be necessary to balance this budget.

Please support the consensus that these four groups arrived at. We didn't arrive there easily. None of us thought this was a great solution to the problem.

Part of the reason your support is so important, tonight and in May, is because it buys us time, until September or thereabouts, to have a Special Town Meeting should the cuts be necessary because, by September, we'll have some idea where or if there are holes in the budget in terms of retirements and positions that haven't been filled yet, new positions that haven't been filled yet. We'll probably be able to save some of the cuts -- if we made those cuts tonight, they would probably be more drastic, is what I'm telling you, than they would end up being in September. And, for all of those reasons, I really would like you to support the debt exclusion tonight.

We worked really hard at trying to build a consensus between these groups and we really need your support. We all know we may be back in September, making cuts. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, I want to begin with general questions and then we'll get into the line items. Mr. Wilbur and then Mr. Netto. Microphone on the floor, Mr. Wilbur, if can you stand. Thanks.

MR. WILBUR: Jude Wilbur, Precinct 1. I had a question concerning --

FROM THE FLOOR: The mic is off. Can't hear.

THE MODERATOR: I think it's on. I know they were having trouble during the break with some of these. Go ahead. Try it again.

MR. WILBUR: Well, I'll just speak up.

THE MODERATOR: No. Try it again.

Because it's being picked up by television.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: It's hard to calibrate it unless you talk into it. They can't hear it.

MR. WILBUR: Jude Wilbur, Precinct 1. I had a general question for the Town Administrator or for Ms. Lemoine. Both of you have mentioned a prioritized list of cuts that will be worked on should the ballot initiative fail, and my question is, is that list available with the numbers and the departments and the anticipated impasse that these cuts will have? I think that would be very useful if not tonight, before the question goes to the ballot if it passes here tonight. Do you have a way of balancing the budget, even as unpleasant as it may be? I think we need to know what that plan is.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: Certainly. And, again, the question comes on what potential cuts would be offered in the event we call the doomsday scenario where no additional state aid comes in; the ballot question fails. And again, this will definitely be subject to the review and scrutiny of the Finance Committee and Selectmen, but what I offered for a potential is that it will have to be starting off with the educational cuts of between 340 - 350 thousand dollars. It would have a major impact on the educational department.

We may have to postpone the new positions that we've placed in the budget, postpone the public safety staffing and Fire Department and the Police Department and those associated benefits for an additional, you know, 250 to 300,000 and that's a good start for potential.

MR. WILBUR: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Joe Netto, Precinct 9. I have a great deal of concern about the process of how this was done as a Town Meeting Member, and I don't care for how the process of how this was done. I have been a Town Meeting Member in this town since the passage of

Proposition two and a half, like many of you that I see as I look out there. I'm not going to talk about the budget. Again, I want to talk about our role as Town Meeting Members.

We are the ones that set the tax rate, not the Board of Selectmen, not the Finance Committee. And I've said this before: it's how we vote on Article 11. We are the ones responsible for setting the tax rate in the Town of Falmouth. Yes, we can get state aid, we can get this, we can get that, but we make the decisions based on facts, based on listening to people, based on figures. Every Proposition two and a half override which we've had and debt exclusion since I've been a Town Meeting Member has been written up as a separate article. It has a number. And in that article, it has a figure. If you look on the page in your warrant book, the page that has no number on that page, but it's the same page that the Chairman of the Finance Committee read from, you see all the figures. When I have Town Meeting Members calling me up in the weeks preceding this meeting tonight and saying, "Joe, do you know what article is the debt exclusion?" "How much is the debt exclusion?"

I told Dr. Antonucci I was going to mention his name down at the break when I was talking to him about this, he says, "I couldn't find it either. It took me a while." So how do you expect the lay people in the town to understand this?

I expect as a Town Meeting Member, when I vote on something, to know exactly what the figure is. As Mr. Wilbur said, "I want to know the consequences." When I go back home to my neighborhood, I have to answer to people: why did you vote for this? Why did you vote against that?

What are the consequences if this debt exclusion does not pass?

The answer that I just got was not -- does not satisfy me. This is part of the discussion earlier when I got up about the positions. The fiscal responsibility of this town comes on our

votes. And I would like to make an amendment, an amendment for discussion because I have to take this right out of Selectmen Carey's talks as I listen to him: the process hasn't been followed. And the amendment that I offer is that we delete the paragraph under \$95,116,070 that starts out with "And further that the town request" and ends with "the April 1999 Annual Town Meeting." That has a major impact. And I do that for discussion purposes.

Don't forget, folks, this debt exclusion

has to pass the popular vote in May. The previous speaker said "Someone has put a gun to our heads". Can somebody tell me what the figure is? I've heard 630,000, 629,000. When I --

THE MODERATOR: 629,008.

MR. NETTO: It is going to be -

THE MODERATOR: 629,008.

MR. NETTO: That's 629,008.

THE MODERATOR: Page one of your warrant book. It's listed in your warrant book.

MR. NETTO: Well, I guess Dr. Antonucci and myself couldn't find that, either. So, where is that found? And other Town Meeting Members. Can you tell me the page, Mr. Whritenour?

MR. WHRITENOUR: Page 1.

MS. VALIELA: Page 2, actually.

MR. NETTO: Oh, page one and page two.

MS. VALIELA: Page 2.

THE MODERATOR: So the amendment would be in order to reduce the revenue projection if the expenditure projection was also reduced.

MR. NETTO: The amendment is to cause discussion on this article --

THE MODERATOR: Okay --

MR. NETTO: -- and the process --

THE MODERATOR: I want to be clear that,

as Town Moderator, I will not allow you to walk out of this room this week without a balanced budget.

MR. NETTO: I realize that, Sir. And I know that and I knew that was going to be the answer. The message I am trying to deliver and I would hope that other fellow Town Meeting Members, is we should have all of the information presented to us. I don't feel that this has been done on this issue. I would like to see any debt exclusion Proposition two and a half listed as a separate article, and as I am talking, I am trying to look where this exact figure is, on page 1.

THE MODERATOR: If you look in the Revenue column, the last revenue -- second to last revenue projection. The last one is Borrowing, second to the last is Debt Exclusion for Water Tanks as a revenue -

MR. NETTO: Oh. Excuse me. You mean in Article 11 on the budget?

THE MODERATOR: In the front of your warrant booklet is the report of expenditure.

MR. NETTO: Oh, all right.

THE MODERATOR: And revenue for the annual operating budget.

MR. NETTO: Okay, correct, but why isn't that listed per se as the article that Mr. Palmer will end up having to print on the ballot? That's where some confusion has come in. Every other, when I researched back, every other article, the way it was in Town Meeting is basically the way it appeared on the budget, with the figure there. Not having the figure under Article 11, which is our budget, and on the front the way it was, quote unquote, didn't look that quite official. So, anyhow.

That's not only how I feel. I think there's other people here who feel that way, too. We feel, some of us as Town Meeting Members feel, that we have been somewhat left out of the

process. That everything was dumped into the one bottom line of the budget Article 11 to accept and reject. And we know we are not going to leave here, I know that was your answer, to repeat again, we have to leave here with a balanced budget. And, after saying that, I withdraw my amendment.

But just to get up here and speak on the issue as how I feel I've been treated as a Town Meeting Member is not correct. The process was not followed. And there are numerous notes I took on things that were said. And the bottom line is that the Falmouth taxpayer, no matter whether you have the debt exclusion or Proposition two and a half, the Falmouth taxpayer has to fund the budget that we pass. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Moreland. Before you pass that mic back. Mr. Moreland, do you still want the floor?

MR. MORELAND: Benjamin Moreland, Precinct 4. I am looking through the budget and I think there is one very big cost to the town that is not itemized, and that's insurance. There was a talk, oh, several times that the Selectmen was going to get a survey on how many vehicles are actually on the road that belong to the Town of Falmouth. Has that report come through?

And the next point I wanted to make was how much do we pay for insurance?

And maybe, are we getting close to the point or past the point that we might be a town that self-insures? Because if we are paying over a certain amount, then it comes to a point that we could build our own fund and maybe save money at the same time.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: Your know, that's an excellent suggestion and I'm glad you brought it up. One of the key things that we've done is, first of all, a complete revamping of the Town's insurance program. And, you know, to answer the other question, yes, we have the detailed inventory of every single

vehicle. That has been completed and you can look at that in the Selectmen's office. And, the first thing that we did with the

insurance is we joined a self-insured pool, and we transferred our insurance out of the private commercial carriers and into the self-insured pool that's run by the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association, which is an arm of the Mass. Municipal Association. And through that program, we've discussed establishing our own insurance fund so that, when funds become available, we can place funds in that insurance trust fund. And, in fact, just last Town Meeting, we had articles on that this Town Meeting approved so we could work through the state legislature to establish that property and casualty trust fund and we just received word that that trust fund has been approved by the legislature and what we hope to do is when we have funds in the insurance account at the end of the year, if we establish our own reserves, past a certain point, we can adopt additional risk for local insurance.

So, we've saved hundreds of thousands of dollars by joining the self-insured pool; we're managing the insurance very closely. In the future, we hope to establish in that trust fund the necessary balances that we need to establish in order to take on more risks locally and still be a participant in that self-insured pool and save money. So, it's a great question and we're working on that.

MR. MORELAND: Okay, and just one more point. With the vehicles, I have had several people come and ask, and I've had several people tell me that when we replace a vehicle, instead of getting rid of the old one, it's just being passed on to somebody else, which also ups the insurance and also ups the gasoline costs. And maybe you're on top that, too, I don't know. But I think it would be good to hear about it.

MR. WHRITENOUR: Yes, sir.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: We've frozen the number of municipal vehicles in town. The Board of Selectmen has adopted a new municipal vehicle policy that provides close scrutiny of the use of Town vehicles. At certain times, when a -- if a new vehicle is received, if the vehicle that is being replaced is in better condition of another one in another department, it takes less money for maintenance to keep that on the road, we have at times passed it down and but we've always gotten rid of another vehicle that it's replacing, so that the gross number of vehicles on the road has not increased, and, you know, we're looking for areas -- in certain areas the number of vehicles can be decreased. But we've frozen that amount. So there's not a growing amount of vehicles that's creating new costs for insurance or anything like that.

MR. MORELAND: Okay, thank you for making that clear.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. McElroy and then Mr. Latimer.

MS. MCELROY: I'm afraid I am still concerned about funding these public safety positions if this override does not pass, and I'm also concerned about 24 separate line items in excess of \$25,000 with no itemization, just called "other expenses". They range from 25,000 to 394,000, And we could ensure the public safety positions by removing a small amount of money from each of those line items, and I think at the same time it would encourage department heads to itemize their budgets better; that if items are over \$25,000, we need to know what these other expenses are. Certainly, the IRS would not accept that on my forms.

And I have an amendment to delete from each of those 24 lines the specific amounts to a total of \$190,000 to be allocated: \$95,200 to the Fire Department line 130 salaries, and the Police Department line 116, \$94,800 for the funding of Articles 13 and 14. The individual amounts from each of these line items I can read if you want, but I can just give it to you in writing.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, so I heard the increase in certain line items; where is the money coming from, again?

MS. MCELROY: Line 3, 2,000; line 9, Selectmen, 7,000; line 10, Selectmen, 3,000. Line 9, incidentally, is the only one that isn't "other expenses". That 7,000 is the 7,000 that is in excess of what the department requested that for whatever reason is in the budget over the amount they requested. Line 33, Assessors 3K; 45 Collector, 7; 50, Legal, 7,000. Line 64, Information Technology, 7,000. Line 79, Clerk, 2,000. Line 110, Facilities, 10,000. Line 119, Police, 17,000. 136, Fire, 17,000. You really don't want me to read all of this, do you?

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: I just want to see where it's all coming from, make sure it adds up. If you bring it to the Finance Committee, we'll check the math.

MS. MCELROY: That's always a good idea in my case.

THE MODERATOR: Make sure the transfers add up. But, to address your issue of the itemization of other Expense line items, Madam Chairman or Mr. Whritenour. Madame Chairman, to address the detailed budget, which we know is available upon request. This is how big it is, that's why we don't mail it out to everyone.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: Okay, Margo -- Margo.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. McElroy, you're getting an answer to your question.

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: You need to pay attention to me. This is how big the budget was when it started. Those other expense line items are a conglomeration of anywhere from two line items to 25, 30 line items in any given budget and they represent things other than salaries and wages. They are very often vehicle maintenance, and things of that type. I brought the book out. I took the book out so that I could look up specific for the Police Department or the Fire Department

because I thought those probably would be the best examples.

MS. MCELROY: Well, in the past --

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: The number of other

expenses in the Police Department total 64,000. But it is made up of in state and out of the state travel, dues and memberships, administrative expenses, professional development, drug investigation expenses, confidential investigations, training, educational reimbursement. I mean, those are -- it's just a combination of other items. It's not one -- it's not a catch-all miscellaneous account that the department head can spend any way he wants. There are line items attached to those.

MS. MCELROY: Some departments itemize a \$2,000 line item. A few years ago, the School Department was taken to task for not itemizing. We now get a separate booklet that explains the School Department budget in line items. I am sure there are reasons for these, but we have asked at many Town Meetings to have more specifics on what this amorphous "other" is and it seemed like away of sharing the pain.

The bottom line does not change, and at Fall Town Meeting, if the override passes, we can reallocate these monies without jeopardizing the public safety positions.

THE MODERATOR: I just want to talk a little bit about the procedure sort of in general. Because this has come up on and off since I've been Moderator and before about how far we detail and itemize the budget. This body approves a nomination that I make for members of a Finance Committee, who sit in the front row and some of them actually have their huge binders, and they go line item by line item by line item, and we give them a three year term to do that research for us. And their legal weight as a Finance Committee is as an advisory board to our Town Meeting, to look at each of those line items and to come back and give us their advisory opinions.

I've said on numerous occasions that this binder, as well as Judy Magnani for the many years of her dedicated service

on the Finance Committee, that this is available and open for public review. It's been available since the starting back in January, February, as the creation of these budgets were available. And specifically, one of the line items that the previous speaker is looking to cut is the one that mails out these little booklets. Now imagine mailing out that booklet to all 253 Town Meeting Members.

So I just want us to think a little bit.

You do what you want with the motion. I'm not getting in the middle of that. But just to think a little bit about the process that we actually put together a committee of 15 people to dig into all of that, and this is the format that they -- and they could adjust this, based on our recommendations -- that this is the format that they bring back to us, with their recommendations. And then they are accountable with this binder so that we can find out where every penny of the 95 or \$98 million goes.

School Committee, we're not allowed to change any line item in the School Committee other than the bottom lines. That's state statute. And that's why in this budget they only have their two line items and then they give us the supplement so we can know a little bit more about it. But our legal authority does not allow us to usurp the power of the School Committee to go into line item budgeting of the School Department.

I just wanted to kind of put that out there.

Ms. Taylor, then Dr. Antonucci.

MS. TAYLOR: Well, I am very grateful to

the Finance Committee for doing this work. Of course I don't always agree with them, but thank goodness they are doing this work and putting it in the format that we can carry in hand. I think this is a -- not a good amendment. I certainly hope we'll vote against it. We will have the chance if necessary in September, as we've been told, to make the hard decisions that might have to be made if the debt exclusion doesn't pass.

But I think it's ridiculous to pass this amendment at this point.

THE MODERATOR: We're doing the math on

the amendment. What I'm going to do since we always go section by section of the budget, Ms. McElroy, you have a copy, as well, of your amendment? Okay. As we go through the amendment, knowing that Ms. McElroy has a total sum of that amount, that we will go through and make those amendments in each department so that we can give the full air to each department's budget as we go through it. Otherwise, we're going to have a series of different lists. So we'll do it as we go to each line item, and debate the merits of making that adjustment to that line item, knowing the larger goal is that final number. Otherwise, I'm just going to get a series of lists from Town Meeting Members.

And it does add up to 190,000. So we'll do that as we go. Good job.

All right, Mr. Dufresne and then Mr. -

MR. DUFRESNE: Adriene Dufresne. At this time I will speak as a member of the Finance Committee. I hope you will not support this amendment to this budget. We scrutinized for about two and a half months and, trust me, I'm probably as penny-pinching as anybody in this room when it comes to the money that goes into the budgets, and we do scrutinize them item by item.

So, her amendment, you know, if we're going to pick and choose in order to support something that I think the override is ultimately going to -- the debt exclusion, rather, is ultimately going to support, if we support it here tonight, maybe we can get the general public to support it on the ballot.

The Finance Committee has some serious reservations about that in the first place. I think that was outline by my chairman a little earlier. Trust me, this kind of an amendment on Town Meeting floor, we'll be here a week from now. So, please, don't even think about it. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Dr. Antonucci. And then
Mr. Latimer.

DR. ANTONUCCI: Robert Antonucci, Precinct 6. I'd just like to
make two comments. And then a plea. The first comment is I think there is
a sense of frustration in this body tonight. It was evident downstairs.
The budget presentation tonight, in all fairness to the presenters, lacked a
lot of details. The material in the budget book was scattered.

However, the Selectmen, the Finance
Committee and the Town Administrator did a commendable job in trying to
present to us the needs of the town for Fiscal Year '07. The needs have
been articulated. They have been outlined. We are going to go through them
now one by one. They've spent a lot of time. Based on that, I think we
need to move forward and not backwards. They deserve to be supported. They
did the work that all of us would like to do. However, we are still
frustrated. Which leads me to my second point.

If we don't do a better job between now
and the annual election, if we pass the debt exclusion, it will go down to
defeat. Citizens want their questions answered: If I vote for the debt
exclusion, what will it mean to the town? If I don't vote for the debt
exclusion, what will it mean to the town?

We have to give them clear,
understandable, concise answers. If we don't, it will not pass. I will
advocate for it, I will work my precinct, but each and every one of us in
this room has to do that. We need more information. We know what those
cuts should be and what they will be. We can't do it in a threatening way.
We have to do it in a very business-like way, looking at the expenses of the
town and the income.

Based on that, I ask for a plea. I ask
you, as we go through this budget tonight, to look at it, to think about it,
to scrutinize it, to think about the work that has been done by the

Selectmen, the Finance Committee and the Administrator and in the end, vote it. We should vote the budget tonight with the debt exclusion, present it before the voters and advocate for it. If we don't win, we'll be back here in the fall.

We have to have some faith and place some confidence in the role of the people we appoint to positions and to those who we elect to the positions. Yes, it's been frustrating, yes, things should have been done differently, and hopefully they will next year. A forty minute representation that doesn't give us what the debt exclusion will mean, needs to be amended and adjusted. That will be done.

So, prospectively, let's look to the future, let's not pass the amendment. Margo, I like your idea, all right? But I want to go forward saying, "We need this amount of money to run this town next year. We want this degree of services and we need the money to do it. In a non-threatening way, a business-like approach. And if we do that, let's see what happens.

But if we leave here tonight disjointed, misinformed, unenfranchised, we're not going to have a win. We can vote the debt and it won't go. So, if we vote it tonight, let's get out there and work for it.

There is no group that is going to advocate for a water tower. Jack isn't going to do that. Jack advocated for full-time kindergarten last year. By the way, he had a great year. He's in full-time kindergarten even though you didn't vote the override for him, okay? But at the same time, there is not going to be anyone, any group out there advocating for a water tower. We're going to have to sell that, guys. It may have been a good idea because the numbers matched, but if you're advocating for elementary kindergarten or phys ed or science labs, it would work.

So, I ask you, let's vote it, let's move ahead, let's get it done. Thanks.

[Applause.]

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer. And then
Mr. Duffy.

MR. LATIMER: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Richard Latimer, Precinct 2. I agree with everything that Bob Antonucci just said about moving forward on this. And therefore I'm speaking against this amendment proposed by Ms. McElroy. If line items need to be deleted to pay for other things, that's the process that we will have to go through next fall if the debt exclusion doesn't pass this May. I mean, that's what's been clearly stated and therefore, I think it's premature to start looking at other parts of a budget that's already been thoroughly scrutinized by the Finance Committee. It just doesn't make any sense.

I agree with Joe Netto's sense of things and that how the public's going to perceive this and it just reminds me of something that's always been apparent to me, Bismarck's famous analogy between legislation and making sausage: it just ain't pretty. And that's the way it usually is here. Yeah, mistakes maybe have been made, we were put in a tough situation by the fact that \$2 million was pulled out from us by the state. We're trying to manage.

So, as Dr. Antonucci said, let's just go forward, and keep in mind, if you've read it in the front of our booklet here, it's the credo for town meeting members; I had it marked here. The "Citizens Check List". I think, if you go down it: Is it necessary?, Can we afford it?, What will it cost ultimately?, How will it affect our basic liberties?, and so forth. I think if we analyze this process that we're doing tonight, the debt exclusion with this budget, I think it passes that checklist. If there's a legal question about it, as I said before, that is for Town Counsel. But for us, let's just do the right thing. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Duffany and then Mr.
Boyer.

MR. DUFFANY: Michael Duffany, Precinct

6. Just a quick question through you to the town counsel, I believe. Is this legally -- is this going to be a legally binding budget where the numbers for the firemen and the policemen and the library assistant are already plugged into the budget?

The numbers, I am assuming, from what I heard tonight, the numbers are in the budget that we're going to vote?

MR. DUFFY: Yes, they are in the budget, so if the budget passes then those positions are funded at this time.

MR. DUFFANY: What does it do to the town as a whole when we go to the ballot if the --

THE MODERATOR: If it doesn't pass, we have to come back and change it.

MR. DUFFY: If it doesn't pass at the ballot --

MR. DUFFANY: I would like to know is --

THE MODERATOR: Then we no longer have a budget that balances; we have to come back and rebalance it.

MR. DUFFANY: And there is no legal problem with that being the case?

MR. DUFFY: It's the way it has to be.

MR. DUFFANY: I beg your pardon?

MR. DUFFY: That's the way it has to be. We have to come back and revisit the budget.

MR. DUFFANY: Okay, so the numbers are already in here. Okay. I guess I do have a little bit of a problem with that.

THE MODERATOR: A legal problem or just a --

MR. DUFFANY: Well, we're going to pass a budget that then we're going to ask the voters at large to pass.

THE MODERATOR: To authorize the revenue

choices, yes.

MR. DUFFANY: Right.

THE MODERATOR: And if they do that,

everything's fine. If they don't do that, we come back here and we create a balanced budget. Meanwhile, the wheels are spinning at Town Hall, the Finance Committee and the School Committee and they come in with some good proposals on how to do that.

MR. DUFFY: It happens in other towns.

That's the way it goes.

THE MODERATOR: I talk to town meeting moderators that have two or three of these meetings over the course of the summer because they screwed it all up, they didn't balance it the first time. The Town Manager isn't as competent as ours is and he gives them bad revenue projections. And, through no fault of the voter's voting, they just mess it all up at Town Hall, and by the time it comes back to the end of the year, they can't certify the budget because all the projections, all of the numbers, the Finance Committee didn't do their homework.

We've never had that problem. The only time we've come back to this body was when we had to make cuts.

MR. DUFFANY: Yeah, I certainly have no problem with what the Finance Committee does and I don't look to micro manage those other expenses for the reasons that were said. But I guess I just have a little bit of a problem with us creating the tax rate here tonight, but we really aren't, because that's going to happen in May.

I just think we - let's put our cards on the table.

THE MODERATOR: But the DOR won't certify the rate until we have the budget in balance.

MR. DUFFANY: So the proper way to do it wouldn't be to leave those numbers out until they were voted -

THE MODERATOR: Oh, we'll be back here

in time to make sure it's certified.

MR. DUFFANY: I just had to ask the question. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Yes. Madame Chairman, did you -

CHAIRMAN LEMOINE: I wanted to add while those numbers are in the budget for those new positions, remember we are voting a budget that doesn't start until July 1st. So, not a cent of that money can be spent until July 1st. The town vote comes in May. If the town votes no, and the cuts need to be made, obviously your first line of defense is not to start hiring people when you know you're going to have to make cuts. And conceivably that's why I said the flexibility of waiting until September to be able to make those cuts might mean we can still put the emergency people on duty because somebody else has retired and their position has not been filled.

But not a dime of the 2007 budget can be spent until July 1st, okay?

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Johnson and then Mr. Boyer. Microphone to my right, please.

MR. JOHNSON: Leonard Johnson, Precinct

5. I'd like to just make a couple comments about water towers and paying for the water towers. We've heard from the superintendent -- the water superintendent that we are going to have to reduce the usage of water in this town aggressively over the next five years. It seems to me the way that we can attempt to get some revenue to help balance this budget is to raise water rates aggressively. We're going to have to cut our water usage and maybe if we raise rates aggressively, we can help produce some revenue and reduce the consumption of water and maybe some of these people that have these lovely lawns and run all these sprinkler systems will have to pay through the nose for it.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Boyer.

MR. BOYER: Mr. Moderator, Peter Boyer, Precinct 5. I would like to build on what Dr. Antonucci talked about in terms of sorting out the real facts of the case. And I'd like to really focus on a different aspect of this, and that is the water rates. The Town Administrator suggested that in fact we were underfunding our water costs by some \$542,000 I think was the number he mentioned. I look in the budget and I look in the projections of the costs for this year including the debt service that is part, now part paid for by the water service and I don't really make that connection. I think it would be very useful if, in terms of presentations, the town as part of the upcoming debate learned about what in fact is our water deficit.

You will see in the budget, the water utilities budget is about \$2 million. In the unexcluded debt, the debt for water stuff including the \$600,000, is about a million, three. So that's 3.3 million. And there are indirect costs in health insurance and other insurance, another couple hundred thousand dollars. And something for retired water department employees, some of that. The water revenues, the water superintendent informs me, every year are now four and a half million. We haven't got to four and a half million with the rough numbers that I've suggested, so I am sure that there is a reason why the Town Administrator proposes that we are in a deficit of some \$542,000 in our water rates.

I believe that water rates should be charged for the water services. People who use water and don't have to pay the full freight for it don't really conserve. So I think that the idea of paying for water through water rates is an important one. And that's why I really oppose the debt exclusion that removes this \$600,000 from the calculations of water costs and puts it on the taxpayer's side rather than the water rate user's side.

Of course, the debt exclusion isn't discretionary. We know that in the case of the library, if the voters vote

no, it doesn't get built. In the case of this particular debt exclusion, if the voters vote no, we're going to still pay the debt. We are not going to cancel that. We're going to pay that debt. And so that's why I felt really that this -- and I understand and accept the rationale for doing it this way. I believe it is bad financial policy to do that and I don't intend -- although for several days I've had in mind to introduce the amendment that Mr. Netto introduced of delete the paragraph that says "Let's do the debt exclusion".

Incidentally, you understand that that paragraph does not direct. It doesn't make the decision. The Selectmen make the decision. That paragraph says, "We request that the selectman do it." It doesn't require that they do it. They could choose not to if they so chose.

In any event, I am presuming that this will go forward despite the opinions that I hold, but I do once again reiterate my belief that a detailed accounting of the water rate structure and what it pays for -- and if we reduce this, are we making money out of the water system? My guess is at least for the near term, we are. Sure, future projects may eat up that gap. I suspect that as of right now, if my rough calculations are in any degree accurate, subtracting 600,000 will mean that we're not matching revenue with expense. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. McElroy.

MS. MCELROY: When I got my -- is this on? When I got my warrant and tried to understand this budget, and I've read a lot of them, I frankly thought we would show up at town meeting and town counsel would tell us that we could not do a debt exclusion in this way. So I really felt we should have some discussion of the budget in general rather than just listing for the public these line items that mean very little to people just listening to the list. And I will withdraw my amendment, but I really feel that this is a horrific way to have to do this financing. And hopefully, it is legal.

But it really is wrong to hold the taxpayer hostage to the things that you admit are the highest priorities for the town: the public safety issues, the public education issues, and to back-door an override through a debt exclusion, it didn't seem sound and I really felt people should look harder at it before going forward with it. But I will withdraw the amendment in hope of getting some sleep tonight.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Lichtenstein, you were next on my list.

I've got you on the list if you want to have a seat. I've got a huge list. What's that? I just let you speak two speakers ago.

Ms. Lichtenstein.

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: I have a request. If the Finance Committee -- and I appreciate all of the hard work they are doing and I know they go through all these line items --

THE MODERATOR: Is that on?

MS. LICHTENSTEIN: On? Yes. No?

Okay. I appreciate all the work that the Finance Committee has done and I know they've looked at each one of these items. I think it would be very helpful to Town Meeting Members, if the Finance Committee is not unanimous, in presenting a minority opinion. I think that minority opinion might answer a lot of the questions that Town Meeting Members have. That's all.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Freeman.

MR. FREEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Through you, Mr. Moderator, to Mr. Whritenour. This whole situation of about a debt exclusion for the water towers is ludicrous and let me tell you why. You know, you look in the citizen checklist that we have here and it indicates something which is very true here. Many proposals are like icebergs; only a small fraction of the total cost is apparent on the surface.

What I'm getting at: I have been a Town Meeting Member for over ten years. In 1997, our water rates were increased. And the reason they

were increased was after we had feasibility studies of the new water towers which are three. There have been no more since. And we also approved at Town Meeting \$7,070,000 for the purpose of funding the water tower project. Why, then, if we had allocated an increase in the water rates, which was understood at that time would pay off in 30 years the loan that was taken out, now what we have, we looked on that chart, that if we have a debt exclusion for \$629,000 on top of what we've already done, if we take a look at that chart, 2023 I think is the cut off date to go down to zero. Now we are looking at the following: If in 1997 we increased the water rates with the understanding that in 30 years we would have the debt paid off, we are talking that would be 2027. We are now looking at 2023 with the debt exclusion. It doesn't make sense. We are paying for something twice. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: If you want to respond,
Mr. Whritenour.

MR. WHRITENOUR: Well, I would like to point out that the water tax you financed for 20 years, not 30 years. And I would, you know, very much caution you against a financing like that for 30 years, you know, you would be wasting so much money in interest that, you know, I don't think that that would be sound for the financial markets that they'd even allow that to happen.

And I think that the key piece is, it's very true, in 1997, the water rates were increased with the idea that this would cover the cost of the new water tanks. But the key thing, and this is why this is also a critical sort of piece for our Water Department as well: since 1997 -- again, you know, we have a water system that goes back to 1904. There are a long list of modernizations, of improvements that have taken place since 1997 to keep that a very high quality water system. It includes the water mains, the fixtures that we put in, the meter replacement, the Crooked Pond well system. There is even another article for the Long Pond system. I mean, the list goes on. There is also a very long list of Water Department

capital projects that are proposed over the next succeeding years. We won't stop modernizing the Water Department. And we do have a very highly detailed accounting of the water rates. And if you do -- you know, remember, you have to factor in what is budgeted in the fall for the capital for the water, not just what is in the operating budget. You have to factor in all the debt service, not just a portion. And if all of the indirect costs and everything are factored in there, right now, you do have a substantial shortfall in the overall water rates that it's just not just covering everything that we hope that they'll cover.

And furthermore, we're also still under the gun for more increases in the water rates to fund these future projects.

One of the things that this debt exclusion helps to do is to take some of the pressure off those water rates so rather than come in with a 15 percent increase this year, we are able to have a one percent increase on the property taxes and devote the future rate increases to some of these modernization projects. And I know it would have been great if the funds appropriated in 1997 funded the whole project all the way through the year 2023, but you know the honest truth is that they didn't. Those amounts, the increases at that time were inadequate to cover the cost and the additional projects that we've had to do to modernize the system, increased the costs.

And we're looking very closely at the water rates. And again there will be some adjustment to those, moving forward. But it's hoped not to get a big increase just to bring us up to status quo. Let's have the future water increases tied in with some of the increased improvements that we need to make for that system.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, microphone for
Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS: Mr. Moderator, Carl E.
Lewis, Precinct 5. Is Mr. Netto's amendment still on the table?

THE MODERATOR: No.

MR. LEWIS: May I put it back on?

THE MODERATOR: As I said, a motion to amend the revenue would also need to include the expenditure. So, if you'd give me something that balances, then we'll go through it when we get to the line items. Mind you, we haven't started the budget yet, but when we get there, we'll do it line item by line item.

MR. LEWIS: Let me explain my thinking.

THE MODERATOR: Uh-huh.

MR. LEWIS: And that is, several people talked about no article referring to the exclusion directly. This would give the Town Meeting Members a chance to vote up or down on the amendment, which would therefore say whether they support the exclusion.

THE MODERATOR: And if they vote yes, then we would make the appropriate adjustments? That's -- yeah, I'll take that as a -- the omnibus budget, there's no limit on amendments. I will take that as a motion to get a sense of the body. If the motion passes, the body will be required before I adjourn this article to balance this budget.

MR. LEWIS: One other thing.

THE MODERATOR: You have a two part --

MR. LEWIS: I want to commend whoever sent out the taxes so they arrived today when we're talking about the exclusion.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Lewis, do you want a sense the body vote or binding vote to start? Because I'm thinking a sense of the body, we might be able to vote that now. If it's a binding vote, you know, we'll continue to debate it.

MR. LEWIS: Can I have the question again.

THE MODERATOR: I am wondering if you would like to have a sense of the body vote as to whether or not they want that revenue option. And then, if they do, we can vote to make it binding.

The reason why I am asking that is we haven't even started the budget yet. And maybe it's good to get a sense of the body first before we go and try to find out how we're going to do that.

MR. LEWIS: So you want to vote it now?

THE MODERATOR: So, yeah. So, is your motion a sense of the body?

Okay, the question has been placed before -- I am trying to make this as easy as possible. The question is on the floor, a sense of Town Meeting as to whether or not you want this budget to include a debt exclusion as a revenue projection. If the sense of the body is no, then we are going to have to go through this budget and make sure that you reduce the budget by 629,008.

FROM THE FLOOR: Oh, oh.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. You can say "Oh", but I'm not going to let you out until you balance the budget. Okay? So that's -- let's have any further discussion on a just a sense of the body, first. So, discussion on a sense of the body motion. Go ahead, Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: At least one Town Meeting Member asked for a minority vote. I was one of the two people that voted against this. In the beginning, it was a six to five vote not to have a debt exclusion. We did the same thing Town Meeting's doing. When it came to making the cuts late in the evening, very late, people changed their minds. It's very easy to say we don't want to raise our taxes, and that was my vote and it was my final vote. The majority of the people, after trying to make the cuts in the budget, a budget that we reviewed and couldn't find cuts in originally, decided not to.

My recommendation to the Finance Committee was to cut the items in the budget that the Administrator had given us. It was the Fire Department, it was the Police Department, it was the library. It was the things not necessarily that I'd like it cut, but it was the only proposal that had come from the administration to us to give a recommendation on. And I think

Joanne may have the list of cuts that we had proposed at that point in time that added up to \$629,000. Many of us don't want to cut the fire, or the safety of the community and don't feel it's the right place to make cuts.

My recommendation is if the administration and the Selectmen come up with a better plan, a way to have the cuts, bring to become to us if this fails. And maybe we can have the fire and police and cut someplace else. But that was the only proposal that before us at the time. That's the best I can do for the minority report, there were only two of us in the end.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Mr. Netto.

MR. NETTO: Well, thank you. I am glad to see that somebody listened as I was speaking. That's exactly what I meant. As a school teacher you stand in front of your students and you speak and you hope, you know, one or two kids get it. Well, I guess in this case Dr. Antonucci and Mr. Lewis got it. Because this is in Article 11, what you just said, Mr. Vieira, is the point I was trying to make. Because now it's part of the budget. So who in this room is going to vote against the debt exclusion?

It would be ludicrous if we did that as Town Meeting Members, because we were just told now we got to go through this and find \$629,000. Well, I don't know about you, but I'm planning on leaving on vacation Saturday.

[Laughter.]

THE MODERATOR: That was my attention initially, was to only allow the motion with your cut so that you don't throw one motion on the floor and shirk the responsibility of finding the 629,000. So, a sense of the body, I think that's a good way for us to move forward.

MR. NETTO: Thank you, Mr. Vieira. To the people on the stage: the next town meeting, when you give us a Proposition two and a half override -- and this is just one of four ways -- they're all Proposition two and a half overrides. I was a town employee, too. Give it to us as a

separate article. Because by tying this into eleven, that was the point I'm trying to make. Thank you, Mr. Vieira.

I think we're starting to see the consequences and the difference of keeping it separate. And I still fail to see where the figure has been put into the article that we're going to vote on.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Okay, Mr. Rhodes, is this on the sense of the body of the debt exclusion? Okay, and then Mr. Richards. I've got Mr. Rhodes and then Mr. Richards.

MR. RHODES: Scoba Rhodes, Precinct 8.

I guess I have been sitting out here a little too long. Because it's this body that's responsible for us being where we are right now. You go back a few years, do you remember those windows of opportunity that were talked about? And you got convinced to go and blow money on projects here in town. You thought they were good because you voted for them, and they all cost you money. And the fact that they cost you money and you did overrides -- because, see, an override stays on your taxes forever. Debt exclusions go away -- if you live long enough, okay.

[Laughter.]

MR. RHODES: But it's this body that is

responsible for us being in the financial shape we are in, because when you went and filled one of those windows of opportunity and the state decided to cut the funding that they were sending here, we are now in a bind. Well, we got to get out of that bind. And the only way I can see we can make that happen now, is vote the budget with the debt exclusion. Because it says at that point we can pay our bills, we can also pay our police and firefighters so they can come and take care of us. School teachers need to be paid as well, and you all want the school buses to take your kids to and from school. So the only way we are going to make this happen, is vote the budget with the debt exclusion.

THE MODERATOR: Dr. Richards.

DR. RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

I would like to lend a perspective to this conversation this evening that goes back to the spring town meeting of 2005 when I was introduced to this body. Since that time, I have been working to try to address what was being discussed last spring regarding the override that the School Department and the School Committee had presented to Town Meeting. I began in July of 2005. And, during that summer I met with individual members of the Finance Committee, the School Committee and the Selectmen in an attempt to try to understand where the town is coming from and the concerns that were being expressed that I heard and that I read about in the papers.

I spent a lot of time working to better understand that because I had a goal in mind. I wanted to come back to this Town Meeting and be in a position where I felt there was more consensus, more collaboration that I could speak to. Since starting in July, I collected from the Finance Committee the questions that they had that were unanswered back in the springtime from their perspective. I articulated those to the Finance Committee to make sure that those were actually the questions they wanted answers to last spring so that I could make sure that by the end of this process they received those answers.

I also went out and I established parent representatives from all seven of our schools, and invited them into the process. And I encouraged them to become informed, to ask questions, to answer questions that were raised by parents and teachers in the schools that they represented so that people would fully understand the process that we were going through.

I had several meetings with the Town Administrator. I had meetings with the Finance Committee liaisons throughout the fall and the winter and gave them the opportunity to ask any questions that they wanted. They got the answers to the questions that they asked. I provided them the materials that they wanted so that they would understand what we were trying to do in our budget process. I created budget binders and sent them out to many people so that they would have access to the information, the same kind

of information that the School Committee and others would have access to. I also spent time inviting them to ask more questions that we could answer during the process.

I then went ahead and I had meetings with the School Committee's budget subcommittee during the fall and the winter and the School Committee later on in the winter to talk about the specifics of the budget that I was proposing. The School Committee ended up approving that budget.

I also had meetings with chairs of the various boards. We organized three meetings of the three boards. Those three meetings led us from the point we were uncertain about what we were going to do and whether or not we were able to collaborate in the process to the point where the final meeting, you see the presentation here this evening from both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee, and the School Committee stands behind the same collaboration. We come to you with the united presentation that we hope you will support this evening, and that includes the debt exclusion that we have been talking about this evening.

I've made presentations to the three boards, to the School Committee and to the Finance Committee, and I answered all of those questions that the Finance Committee members raised early on in that process and gave them to them in writing and put them on the web so that people would have access to that information.

I've worked very hard to try to bring us to the point where we would have some consensus as a community to move forward not only with what the town requests but with what the School Department feels they need.

Now, I have about 35 overheads that I could present to you to give you lots more of the detail that came out of this process, but I can guarantee you that it's been both an exhausting but an exhilarating process that I've enjoyed very much. And this debate this evening has also been very encouraging, but I still hope in the final analysis you support what's being presented here; that you will approve the debt exclusion override and the budget that we've been presenting here this evening.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, Mr. Wilbur and then Mr. Latimer if this is on the sense of the body about the revenue source? Okay.

MR. WILBUR: Mr. Moderator, Town Meeting Members, I think that we have seen a very interesting process here over the last couple of hours, where a series of very interesting proposals have been made concerning this budget.

Now, I think Mr. Rhodes spoke clearly. Back when everybody was flush, we didn't have these discussions about the budget. I can remember \$300,000 items going without discussion. But when things get tight, this is when this sort of stuff comes up.

However, I would suggest -- and Mr. Antonucci suggested we have trust in the people that we elected and the people that have been appointed to oversee this. And I think at the point we are now in the discussion, we pretty much have to go with it.

What I am suggesting, though, that in hard times when the budget is crunched, it is the responsibility of the Town Meeting Members to get to the budget hearings, like in the fashion that Dr. Richards has described. Don't come to Town Meeting with across the board percentage cuts. Don't come to Town Meeting with, "Let's reject the bottom line". Get in the process a lot sooner. This is particularly for when you are not running -- when you are running a deficit okay?

I am sure Ms. Lemoine has the numbers that you want to look at, but you are not going to do it tonight. So I strongly suggest that we vote this sense of body and then vote the budget. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Mr. Latimer.

MR. LATIMER: Richard Latimer, Precinct 2. It's my sense of this issue, I think Mr. Rhodes stated the issue very clearly and very eloquently.

I just want to address some of the arguments that have been made on the other side. Just specifically one argument. It's been suggested

that we should not use the debt exclusion because we can use aggressive water rate increases to generate this money. I think when we look at that question, what we want to realize is that the object of the debt exclusion is to pay off a debt on water towers, but the purpose of that debt exclusion is to pay for needed services for this town, safety services and educational services. And when we look at the real purpose of this debt exclusion, what these people who are suggesting about aggressive rate increases on water amounts to a regressive tax, a regressive tax that burdens those in this community, those on fixed incomes who can least afford that. I don't think that that's a good proposition at all to avoid a debt exclusion when the purpose is to provide essential services to our citizens.

In fact, I going to refer again to the citizen checklist number 10, does it square with your moral convictions, and I would say absolutely not, that that is not the way to conduct our business. We are in a bind. We all recognize it. This whole process has not been pretty. It hasn't been eloquent. But again, the right thing to do, as Mr. Rhodes has said, is to just do it. Thank you. Just do this budget and the exclusion. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Okay, the chairman --

Mr. Lynch.

MR. LYNCH: Kevin Lynch, Precinct 3.

I just want to make one note, here. This is a two-thirds vote that is going to be required on this budget since we are working with a debt exclusion and also transfers for the Stabilization account. So I would suggest that we make this or go with this motion to get a sense of the body so that we know what we are doing. If we say no, we are not going to do the debt exclusion, then we have to start doing the cutting tonight. And I am not recommending that.

I think we should go with the debt exclusion because we need this for the town and, as Dr. Antonucci said, we have to sell it to the other people and then possibly come back in September. If we go through this and

don't get a two-thirds vote, then we're going to have to go through it again, line by line.

THE MODERATOR: That's correct. The final approval vote for this budget will require two-thirds, one because of borrowing and also because we're moving money in and out of the Stabilization Fund which is a required two-thirds. Mr. Murphy.

CHAIRMAN MURPHY: Yes, Mr. Moderator, I'd just like to bring up a couple issues. Number one is it's no secret that I'm a fiscal conservative. And last year at this time, we went through a very contentious situation. That contentious situation this year changed because we in fact had much more communication with the three major policy boards. I thank the chairman of the School Committee, Jamie McDonald, for reaching out to the Board of Selectmen as well as to the Finance Committee. It was unprecedented this year that the three committees worked much earlier than we have in years past to meet the financial crises that happen to be going on in this town.

All the departments came in with higher budgets. I commend Dr. Richards and the School Committee for bringing their budget down to something that could be reasonably worked in. This debt exclusion will fund \$343,000 for the schools to stem what they would have called an override opportunity. We have worked together as a team, communicating back and forth on an ongoing basis. The Board of Selectmen, Finance committee and the School Committee had three open workshops that were open to the general public.

So I encourage you in the future to be part of that process. Some of the things we learned, also, and some of the things that were committed is that Dr. Richards promised us next year to have us a budget before the process started, meaning before the end of December.

I will say a couple of just quick items that I would like to mention to this group, is that a few years back when we did the debt exclusion for the water tax, I used a term that I seldom use: the town was

fat back then. We had a little extra money, and we were able to do something like that without doing a debt exclusion. We were able to do it under the cap. What we did was, we purchased something out of our grocery money. We purchased the water tanks. Yes, shame on us for not keeping up with the water rates to pay those off.

However, the water tanks are not directly involved with just the users. Everybody in this town, whether you're on the water system or not, you benefit from the usage of the water tanks. They provide fire protection. It is a general issue of fairness in this particular situation to remove just this segment from the budget. That's under the cap because they provide fire protection for everybody in this town. Not just the users who happen to be connected to the water system. I as a fiscal conservative think that this is the best way to move this town forward, and I hope that you do as well. Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Let's take -- let's take the motion, the sense of the body vote and then we will decide if we are going to stay after 11:00. All those -- the sense of the body as to whether or not to include in the revenue options the debt exclusion. All those in favor, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: It's the opinion of the Chair is that the sense of the body is that there will be the inclusion of the debt exclusion and the revenue projection for the budget.

At this time the Chair would entertain any other motion. Mr. Hampson.

MR. HAMPSON: Well, Mr. Chairman, you have a lot of people here who like to talk this evening. And I'm going to make the motion to extend this, to go on for another hour.

FROM THE FLOOR: No.

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

MR. HAMPSON: And hopefully, you're going to all vote against it.

THE MODERATOR: Okay.

MR. HAMPSON: Mr. Chairman.

THE MODERATOR: George just does it because I asked him to do it. Thanks, George.

All those in favor of staying after 11:00, signify by saying Aye.

[Aye.]

THE MODERATOR: All those opposed, No.

[No.]

THE MODERATOR: The No's have it. I'll see you tomorrow night at 7:00 for the Special Town Meeting.

[Whereupon, the meeting adjourned.]

C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

COUNTY OF BARNSTABLE

I, Carol P. Tinkham, a Professional Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript represents a complete, true and accurate transcription of my audiographic recordings taken in Falmouth Town Meeting on April 3, 2006, to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

Carol P. Tinkham
Notary Public
My Commission Expires
May 14, 2010

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