

This is an explanation by the Board of Selectmen of the articles to be voted upon by ballot on Tuesday, March 10 between 8 AM and 7 PM at the Barrington Middle School. It is provided by the Barrington Board of Selectmen. For a complete copy of the articles, including complete details on the budget, the Board urges voters to go to the official town website at www.barrington.nh.gov or to the Town Offices at 333 Calef Highway.

Articles 2-4. Zoning Amendment Articles. These have been proposed and recommended unanimously by the Planning Board. A summary of what each article does is stated on the warrant/ballot. The actual wording of the amendments and additional details can be obtained from the Planning Office (664-0195) and are also posted on the town web page www.barrington.nh.gov.

The Board of Selectmen proposed and recommends articles 5-22, including all those that authorize spending money. The total impact on property taxes in 2015 if all of these pass would be 8 cents/\$1,000 or about \$20 for the average home.

Article 5 Proposed New Town Hall. Barrington needs a permanent location for the many functions of town government including records storage and meeting spaces. (1) The former town hall is uninhabitable. The repairs needed to move back into the former Town Hall are very expensive and there is no guarantee the problems were corrected. (2) The town is currently renting temporary space in an office building that is costly, lacks adequate space for meetings, parking and record storage. The lease is set to expire in August, 2016. If a building is to be built before the lease expires approval will be needed at the March 2015 Town Meeting. (3) The proposed building, located on the lot of the former Town Hall, is the best alternative for the needs of Barrington. The request is for \$2,350,000. It will be energy efficient, designed to meet the space needs of the town with modern technology, and provide meeting spaces for the community. Borrowing and construction costs are currently lower than usual, but are likely to rise. This will be a building in which the residents of Barrington can take pride. ***There is no impact on the amount to be raised by 2015 property taxes by the passage of this article but there is a commitment to make payments in future years that will increase property taxes in those years. While there are many factors effecting future property tax impact, the projected annual average net increase is \$35 in the property tax bill (14 cents/1000) on a home currently assessed at \$250,000 from this article.***

Article 6 Operating Budget. The proposed budget for 2015 shows a \$75,000 increase over the 2014 budget, mainly to add a new rescue/firefighter to improve ambulance response times, do more engineering and architectural work, to demolish the former town hall and for snow removal. If this article fails, then the default budget, which represents the prior year's adjusted budget, is adopted. ***The owners of a home assessed currently at \$250,000 could expect an increase in their annual property tax bill of \$20 as a result of this increase in spending.***

Articles 7-13 Capital Reserve Articles. The Board of Selectmen proposed these articles to move money from the Town's fund balance and transfer it to dedicated accounts for future expenditure respectively on #7 fire trucks, #8 fire equipment, #9 library technology, #10 cemetery expansion, # 11 highway equipment, and #12 bridges and culverts. ***None of these result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 14 Emergency Road Repair and Winter Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. The Board of Selectmen proposed dedicating \$100,000 of fund balance to start a fund that could be used in case of emergency road destruction or an unexpectedly expensive year of snow removal. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 15 Police Cruiser Technology. The revolving fund for outside details has built up a balance. The Board of Selectmen proposes \$30,000 to be used to purchase laptops and related new technology to improve public safety. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 16 Funds for Additional Road Maintenance. The Board of Selectmen proposed this article to continue a multiyear plan adopted by the town to save money on long term road maintenance by repairing roads before they deteriorate too far and to use general fund balance for this purpose. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Articles 17-20 Discontinuing accounts. The Board of Selectmen believes these accounts should be eliminated and the money returned for general purposes. The reasons are stated in the articles and involve ambulance, assessment revaluation, and studies of water, roads and land which are no longer planned. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 21 Change of Cemetery Capital Reserve Purpose. The Board of Selectmen proposed this with the support of the Cemetery Trustees based upon a conviction that providing for future expansion of the cemetery is more important at this time than an additional well and building. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 22. Class A Trail. In 2014 the Conservation Commission with the approval of the Board of Selectmen acquired a 300 acre parcel of land known as the A. Harlan Calef Isinglass Preserve. There is a Class IV Road (one that is not maintained) that the Town recommends become a Class A trail to restrict motor vehicle access and preserve the property in its natural state. ***This does not result in an increase in 2015 taxes.***

Article 23. Land Use Change Tax (By Petition). Some years ago the Town voted to put one half of the Land Use Change Tax that it receives into the Conservation Fund. Passage of this article would increase that percentage to 75% going into the Conservation Fund. The Board of Selectmen by a 3-2 vote supports this article.

Article 24 Ordinance establishing a Community Bill of Rights (By Petition). This is not recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5 opposed, none in favor of the ordinance. The Town attorney indicates there is no statutory authority to adopt or enforce portions of the proposed ordinance and that some provisions are contrary to the state and federal constitutions. If adopted it could be costly for the town to defend against those who claim their land is being taken unfairly.