

**TOWN OF WILTON NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 8TH, 2022, ELECTION RESULTS
&
MARCH 10TH, 2022, TOWN MEETING MINUTES**

Moderator William Keefe opened the polls at the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative High School Gym at 8:00 AM for the purpose of voting for Town Officers, Zoning and School Officers. The polls closed at 7:00 PM. From a voter checklist of 2610 registered voters, the following votes were cast with various write-ins omitted: 422 votes, including 15 absentee ballots and 20 new voters.

1. Selectmen – 3 year term	
William F. Condra	78
DJ Garcia	252*
Kellie-Sue Boissonnault	83
Treasurer – 1 year term	
Gail B. Agans	220*
Moderator – 2 year term	
William J. Keefe	376*
Town Clerk & Tax Collector – 3 year term	
Jane K. Farrell	390*
Supervisor of Checklist – 6 year term	
Patricia A. Anderson	194*
Cynthia Diane Foss	150
Cemetery Trustee – 3 year term	
Shane Clark (write-in)	6*
Planning Board – 3 year term – 2 positions	
Shannen L. Coffey	300*
W. Bart Hunter	310*
Planning Board – 1 year term – 1 position	
Randy E. King Sr.	329*
Sewer Commissioner – 3 year term	
Christopher Carter	347*
Sewer Commissioner – 1 year term	
Joanna K. Eckstrom	334*
Water Commissioner – 3 year term	
Kermit Williams	313*
Trustee of the Trust Funds – 3 year term	
Virginia Day (write-in)	5*

2. Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 to the Town of Wilton Land Use Laws and Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, as proposed by the Planning Board, which would update certain Sections of Chapter 4 of the Ordinance, to clarify and/or correct existing requirements and provide further guidance, as follows:
- a. AMEND Section 4.2b to eliminate the phrase “, open water bodies and perennial streams,” and insert the word “and” before the first reference to “water bodies,” to reflect the fact that the defined term “water bodies” includes both open water bodies and perennial streams;
 - b. AMEND Section 4.7 to delete the “,” after the word “vegetation” in line 3 thereof;
 - c. AMEND existing provisions of Section 4.10, as follows:
 - (i.) Add “(available, along with directions on its use, in Information Circular 8333, or updates thereof, issued by the US Bureau of Mines)” after the reference to the Ringelmann chart in line 4 of Section 4.10.4;
 - (ii.) Delete the phrase “and shall not, any event, cast or reflect glare or light beyond the property line” from Section 4.10.6 and replace it with the phrase “and new or replacement residential lighting, including bulbs, shall be cut off so as not to cast direct light across property lines.”;
 - (iii.) Delete the reference to “this Ordinance” in Section 4.10.10 and replace it with “the Wilton Land Use Laws and Regulations”; and
 - d. AMEND Section 4.11 to break out the phrase “documentation of the performance of similar facilities or processes on other sites with sufficiently similar conditions;” at the end of the second paragraph thereof as subsection a. thereof, and renumber the remaining subsections thereof as b. through d.

Yes 314* No 64

3. Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 to the Town of Wilton Land Use Laws and Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, as proposed by the Planning Board, which would correct existing cross-references to prior Section 4 or subsections thereof throughout the Zoning Ordinance, as necessary to reflect the 2021 amendments to existing Section 4, as follows:
- a. REPLACE references to “Section 4.4” in Sections 5.3, 5.5.5, 8.6, 11.4, 13.2, 14.7, 15A.3 and 17.3 of the Zoning Ordinance with “Section 4.12”;
 - b. REPLACE references to “Section 4.6” in Sections 6.6.1, 9A.7.1, and 14.7.1 of the Zoning Ordinance with “Section 4.10”;

- c. REPLACE the reference to "Section 4.6.2" in Section 15.4.11 of the Zoning Ordinance with "Section 4.10.2" and
- d. REPLACE the reference to "Section 4.7" in Section 5.4 of the Zoning Ordinance with "Section 4.4."

Yes 310* No 66

Moderator William Keefe began the 260 Town Meeting at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday March 10th, 2022 at the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative High School Gym. He welcomed everyone and started the meeting by noting the outcome of Tuesday's elections. He then began the Town Meeting by reading Article 4 as follows:

- 4. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended sum of Five Million Eight Hundred Sixty-Nine Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$ 5,869,559) for general municipal operation for the year 2022. Said sum does not include any of the appropriations contained in special or individual Articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required.)

(Budget Committee recommends this Article 7-0-1)
(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Cary Hughes, 222 Isaac Frye Highway and Budget Committee Chairman, explained in detail the multiple facets that comprise this budget. He stated the Operational Budget does not include any Special or Individual Warrant Articles. His detailed explanations were accompanied by numerous slides.

Benefits were the costliest portion of Wilton's general budget costing tax payers \$340,473 (Three Hundred Forty Thousand, Four Hundred Seventy-Three Dollars) in 2022. The next highest cost is Financial Administration, Town Clerk and Voter Registration, then Executive followed by Planning Board, Government Buildings, Property and Liability Insurance, Cemetery Maintenance and lastly by the Zoning Board.

The Public Safety covered the Police, then Ambulance, Fire, Communication, Building Inspection, and Emergency Management budgets.

Cary Hughes explained that while the slide for Highways and Streets also showed the Water and Sewer Budgets, the latter were required to be shown in the budget but the monies were paid for by solely by the municipal water and sewer users.

Further slides compared the approved 2021 Budget of Five Million, Two Hundred Ninety Thousand, Nine Hundred and Seventy-Four Dollars (\$5,290,974) vs. the

proposed 2022 Budget of Five Million, Eight Hundred Sixty-Nine Thousand, Five Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$5,869,559), an increase of 10.94%.

He concluded his Operating Budget Summary by noting the five primary increases as follows:

- Employees are receiving a 5% COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) across the board.
- Ambulance has changes to its revenue policy, insurance payment reductions, and changes to the percentage across Towns based on call numbers.
- Fire Department is seeing increased annual maintenance for its equipment, replacing aging equipment and addressing building mold issues.
- The Highway Department was faced with increased material costs and the impact of bringing on a new Department of Public Works Director. The Highway Department had been overseen by our former Town Administrator, Paul Branscombe, who has since retired, and the role needed to be filled by a new Director.
- Sewer Department increases are dictated by EPA permitting required by the terms of the Municipal Agreement Wilton has with Milford. We have no option than to pay the increases.
- Lastly, he noted Small Donations were seeing an increase due to needed services by Wilton residents.

He explained expenses were curtailed during the pandemic but services need to be given to the town.

Following several discussion points, the Moderator, hearing no new comments, read Article 4. Article 4 was voice vote approved.

Before proceeding with Article 5 the Moderator next asked for a moment of silence in honor of Harry Dailey to acknowledge his numerous and most appreciated contributions to school and town organizations. All in attendance stood.

5. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease agreement in the amount of up to Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) for the purpose of a lease/purchase of a Highway Department Pickup Truck, and to outfit said pickup truck, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Dollars (\$17,000) for the first year's payment for that purpose. This lease agreement contains a non-appropriation clause. With monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this Article 6-1-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Laura Manning, 21 Russell Hill Road, asked why the money was not being withdrawn from the existing Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund? Selectmen Kermit Williams explained that while the Highway Capital Reserve Fund does have the funds to cover this expense, that money has been set aside for future big item expenses. All such large expenses have been earmarked in the town CIP (Capital Improvement Plan).

Moderator Bill Keefe then read the article as written. Article 5 was voice vote approved.

6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Thirty-One Dollars (\$62,531) for the purpose of paying for the second-year lease payment (of the ten-year lease approved by Warrant Article #9 of the 2021 Town meeting) on Fire Engine 1. Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this Article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Neil Faiman, 24 Putnam Hill Road, spoke to ask if this was the same vehicle and lease approved by the voters in 2021 but not yet delivered to Wilton?

Kermit Williams explained that yet it was the same vehicle but by prepaying for the lease Wilton received a significant discount. The completed truck was expected to be delivered this year. He elaborated that government leases require each year's additional payment be approved by the voters. He encouraged voters to continue to fund this lease article, and all of other leases to be voted on tonight, otherwise money previously approved would be wasted.

Moderator Bill Keefe then read the article as written. Article 6 was voice vote approved.

7. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$29,000) for the purpose of making the fifth-year lease payment (of the seven-year lease approved by warrant Article #14 at the 2018 Town Meeting) on the Highway Department's 2019 International 10-Wheel Dump Truck. Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 6-0-2)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

After hearing no questions or discussions, Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 7 as

written. Article 7 was voice vote approved.

8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) for the purpose of purchasing a lawnmower for the Cemetery and Parks and Recreation Department. Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority Vote Required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Deborah Mortvedt, 126 Pead Hill Road, asked if the bid process would be part of this process? Selectman Matt Fish responded they had received multiple bids from multiple vendors. He further explained this equipment was desperately needed and the current mower is continually breaking down.

Laura Manning, 21 Russell Hill Road, asked why the article was requesting so much money when a commercial grade X-Mart model costs between Six Thousand and Eight Thousand Dollars (\$6,000- \$8,000). She also asked why if the Cemetery Capital Trust Fund has millions in "Perpetual Care" these monies couldn't be tapped. Kermit Williams explained only earning from these monies can be used and only on each respective lot. The trust fund capital can't be touched. Nor can the monies be used on the common area around the graves. Driveways, open area maintenance, etc., costs are paid for by the taxpayers. Kermit further explained the Highway Department intent is to pay less for a new mower, if possible, but the cost would not exceed the amount voted in this article.

Bart Hunter, 129 Davisville Road, stated his daughter is one of the individuals who run the mowers. He stated "What they have now is garbage. Voters need to step up and do what is right."

Mary Ann Shea, 207 Dale Street, stated as a Cemetery Trustees she would be happy to speak with anyone who has questions on the Cemetery Capital Reserve funds.

After hearing no questions or discussions, Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 8 as written. Article 8 was voice vote approved.

9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Forty-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$49,000) to purchase a Police Cruiser and associated equipment, and to outfit that Police Cruiser to make it ready for operation. Thirty-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$39,000) are to come from general taxation, and Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) are to come from the Cruiser Replacement Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

After hearing no questions or discussions, Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 9 as written. Article 9 was voice vote approved.

10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be placed in the New Reservoir Dam Repair and Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund previously established. (Established by Article #8 of the 2018 Town Meeting.) Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 3-2-3)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Kermit explained Articles 10 & 11 should be talked about together as they are closely related. He spoke to say if the Sand Hill Reservoir Dam or the Frog Pond Dam failed in a 500-year flood event, the flood waters would be carried down river right through our town and into Milford.

The State of NH Dam Bureau visited both sites and deemed these two dams a high hazard. The estimated cost to repair the Frog Pond Dam was approximately One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000). Kermit went on to say renaming the Capital Reserve fund was necessary to allow for the funds to eventually be expended "for a one-time future hit."

Extensive comments and questions followed from the floor. Selectmen Matt Fish concluded the discussion by noting an upper State dam failed several years ago and multiple folks were killed. The State Dam Bureau is now hyper-attentive to dams with deficiencies. He also stated his personal feelings that the Reservoir was worth saving but he had mixed feeling about spending a huge amount of funds rebuilding the Frog Pond Dam. Complicating the Frog Pond Dam issues is that dam area is mostly in Milford, while the dam itself belongs to Wilton.

Hearing no further comments, the Moderator read Article 10 as written. Article 10 was voice vote approved.

11. To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of the New Reservoir Dam Repair and Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund to the Dam Repair and Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund pursuant to RSA 31:19-a (established by Article #8 of the 2018 Town Meeting) for the repair, maintenance, demolition and/or decommissioning of any dam in the Town, including, but not limited to, the dams at the New Reservoir and Frog Pond. And, furthermore, to name the Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. (2/3 Majority Vote Required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this article 6-1-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Hearing no questions or discussion, the Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 11 as written. Article 11 was voice vote approved by the required 2/3 majority voice vote.

12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to cover costs associated with procuring and installing new repeater communications equipment at the Dram Cup Hill/Crown Castle tower site, to purchase a new radio system for the Highway and Emergency Management Departments, to obtain necessary FCC licenses and authorizations to operate said equipment, to replace outdated dispatch console equipment at MACC Base, and to reprogram existing Fire and Police radio systems to utilize the newly acquired radio frequencies. Monies are to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Fire Chief Don Nourse explained Wilton has no communications system of our own to date. Currently we are part of MACC Base (Milford Area Communications) utilizing an analog system. Our current system, primarily located on Pead Hill, does not enable the full coverage needed for proper Ambulance, Highway, and Police support.

The proposed site is located on Dram Cup Hill which is a Milford parcel, but it is accessed off of McGettigan Road, Wilton, NH. He detailed that the Dram Cup Hill site would offer 70% excellent coverage and the 30% balance would still receive very good coverage. "Much better coverage than exists now." He noted that MACC Base's future is very uncertain and making this change would help ensure Wilton's Highway and Emergency Services had proper communication.

Gerry Humphrey, 104 Dale Street, asked if the Drum Cup Hill project was implemented, would the Pead Hill system remain in place. Kermit Williams answered no it would not stay.

Caroline Keefe, 16 Hillside Drive, asked if the One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) is Wilton's portion. Don Nourse responded yes. He also added that unassigned fund balance monies were to pay for this project rather than taxation.

Following numerous comments and question exchanges, the Moderator read Article 12 as written. Article 12 was voice vote approved.

13. To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of the Town of Wilton's matching share of grant money received for the designing, constructing, maintaining, and repairing of Town-owned infrastructure, including, but not limited to, roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, stormwater systems, parking lots, buildings and building systems, and other Town infrastructure, and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be placed in this fund, and further to name the Select Board as agents to expend from said fund. Monies to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this Article 6-0-2)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Selectmen Kermit Williams explained that grants from the Land & Community Heritage Program (LCHIP) required each applicant town to put up 50% of the money before a grant would be awarded. He stated "they want to make sure towns have skin in the game." The Town Hall cupola needs to be removed, via crane, so necessary repairs can be completed. The roof of Town Hall needs extensive repair too.

This article takes money from our unassigned fund balance and puts it into a fund like this so money can be tapped so we can be ready should grants become available. It helps pay for this if needed.

Joe Torre, 609 Burton Highway, made a motion to amend Article 12 to add the stipulation that the Select Board would have to conduct a special public hearing prior to all expenditures from the Capital Reserve Fund. He felt that Article 12 needed to be modified to prevent the possibility of just two Select Board members deciding with just their votes. The motion was seconded by DJ Garcia and the amendment passed by voice vote.

Kermit Williams first asked the audience to acknowledge Nick as Wilton's new Town Administrator since November 2021.

Following further discussion, the Moderator read Article 13 as amended:

Jennifer Beck, 5 Tighe Farm Road, spoke to say this vote will allow Wilton to compete for grant funds if and when grants become available. Previous grant opportunities have not been able to be sought because there was not time to generate the required matching funds.

Hearing no further comment, the Moderator read Article 13, as amended:

“To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of the Town of Wilton’s matching share of grant money received for the designing, constructing, maintaining, and repairing of Town-owned infrastructure, including, but not limited to, roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, stormwater systems, parking lots, buildings and building systems, and other Town infrastructure, and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be placed in this fund, and further to name the Select Board as agents to expend from said fund. The Select Board will conduct a special public hearing prior to all expenditures from the fund. Monies to come from the unassigned fund balance”.

Article 13, as amended, was voice vote approved.

14. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Four Thousand Dollars (\$34,000) to be added to the Town Hall Fire Protection Capital Reserve Fund (established by Article #30 of the 2018 Town Meeting). Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Hearing no comments or questions, Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 14 as written. Article 14 was voice vote approved.

15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$85,000) to be added to the Town Hall Repair Project Capital Reserve Fund (previously established by Article #8 in 1994). Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 6-1-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Moderator Bill Keefe, hearing no questions or discussions from the floor, read Article 15 as written. Article 15 was voice vote approved.

16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) to be placed in the Public Works Garage Building Capital Reserve Fund (established by Article #14 of the 2017 Town Meeting). Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Moderator Keefe, hearing no questions or discussions from the floor, read Article 16 as written. Article 16 was voice vote approved.

17. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty-Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in the Bridges Capital Reserve Fund (established by Article #12 in 1984). Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0
(Budget Committee recommends this article 6-1-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Abby Dawson, 68 Russell Hill Road, began the discussion by asking what was the status of King Brook Road Bridge.

Selectmen Kermit Williams explained that the King Brook Road Bridge had been red listed by the State of NH in 2007. Wilton voters had approved \$1.4 million to repair the bridge. The State of NH would pay 80% of the monies approved by voters.

Kermit said work hasn't been done due to multiple issues, but the hope was to be able to move forward this year. He was concerned it may be difficult to get construction work done this year, and that the longer the work takes everything costs more than originally anticipated. In the end it is very important to get the work done.

Selectman Matt Fish said the contracted engineering company, Holden Engineering, has dropped the ball on this project and another engineering firm would be hired to complete the project. He articulated his displeasure in their non-action.

Following these comments Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 17 as written. The voice vote on Article 17 was undeterminable. The Moderator then asked for a standing vote. Article 17 was approved.

18. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) for the purpose of continuing repair of the current out-of-service water hole (fire pond) list, as prepared, maintained, and updated by the Fire Department. Monies to come from general taxation. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and shall not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2023, whichever occurs first. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Don Nouse, Fire Chief, spoke first to recognize the extraordinary accomplishment of two of Wilton's longtime Firefighters. He announced Ron Caswell had the distinction of serving 45 years on Wilton's Fire Department and Tom Staiti had the distinction of serving 42 years. He thanked both for their incredible commitment and dedication. A round of applause came from all who were present.

The Fire Chief next explained rural, remote water sources are needed to help protect properties not serviced by municipal water. Per Wilton's Zoning requirement new developments were mandated to have a water source on the site.

Hearing no further discussion following Don's explanation, the Moderator read Article 18 as written. Article 18 was voice vote approved.

19. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixteen Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Three Dollars (\$16,443) to cover the expense of continuing the Community Space Pilot Project from August through December of 2022. Monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this article 6-0-2)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Joe Torre, 609 Burton Highway, was the first to speak with three questions: Is it a donation? Is it an annual expenditure? And lastly will the fund accounting be given to the Budget Committee?

Selectmen Kermit Williams addressed the questions. In answering the first question he said this was like a matching grant program. These funds would cover this first year and part of the next year. This funding will let us see if there is continued interest for a Community Space Program and whether it should be continued.

Kermit Williams stated this program would provide many types of opportunities for activities for kids and adults. He concluded by saying yes it was hoped this would be an annual expenditure, if the program shows success, and that the Budget Committee would review their figures.

DJ Garcia spoke encouraging voters to support the article as it is "a great way to start for a community. The program will cost money going forward but the intent is to keep costs low."

Ron Brown, 979 Isaac Frye Highway, spoke of the importance of community support for this project. "Now and ongoing!" He outlined the tremendous work Wilton Librarian Pat Fickett had done in creating the initial framework.

Jennifer Beck, 5 Tighe Farm Road, stated her current 501c3 Alliance Chairperson experience showed community support is very important in making these projects work.

Joanna Eckstrom, 14 Laurel Hill Street, stated she was part of the 2014 Community Center Group that has been looking for a home. The former Catholic Church site acquisition was not supported by the voters. She encouraged the voters present to support Article 19.

Sandy Lafluer, 285 Burns Hill Road, spoke on behalf the Wilton Collaborative Space Program. She said they are offering, and have had great responsiveness to, the coffee hours and open microphone night events. She encouraged the voters tonight to support the article and concluded by saying thank you for all the interest to date.

Following these many comments, Moderator Bill Keefe than read Article 19 as written. Article 19 was voice vote approved.

20. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Six Hundred Ninety-Nine Dollars (\$4,699) for the purpose of increasing the cumulative total yearly compensation or stipends of all elected or appointed town officials to \$98,674 per year from \$93,975, and to cover the associated payroll taxes, Medicare, and 457b retirement (\$4,140 for stipends/compensation, \$257 for social security, \$57 for Medicare, and \$246 for the town's retirement plan). The monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 5-0-3)

Moderator Bill Keefe stepped aside and asked Deputy Moderator Sara Spittel, to present the article.

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Laura Manning, 21 Russell Hill Road, spoke to say she had several questions. Her first comment was why was the Tax Collector receiving a raise this year when she received a raise last year?

Kermit Williams explained Article 20 "included all elected positions but the majority of the money is for the Town Clerk & Tax Collector. He proclaimed "she was the hardest worker for our town." The "raise" was the same 5% cost of living increase given to all other town employees.

Laura Manning stated she makes more than her counterparts in Milford, Temple or Peterborough.

Select women Kellie-Sue Boissonnault spoke to say she was concerned that should Jane leave the position Wilton's tax payers would be required to pay the same money to some person with no experience.

Paula Keefe, 102 Badger Farm Road, stated that she was the former sister in-law to Jane. She stated Jane's position can't be compared to many other towns around us as their Town Clerks are not also Tax Collectors.

Jennifer Beck, 5 Tighe Farm Road, asked why is this a separate warrant article when it isn't in other towns?

Kellie Sue Boissonnault responded it was done this way for transparency.

Tom Schultz, 122 Burton Highway, spoke saying this was excessive to single out these positions. "Department of Revenue (DRA) may think this is a good idea, but I do not."

Hearing no further comment, Deputy Moderator Sara Spittel read Article 20 as written. Article 20 was voice vote approved.

Deputy Moderator Sara Spittel stepped down and Moderator Keefe resumed his role.

Before Article 21 was begun Sara Spittel, 748 Isaac Frye Highway, made a motion to move Article 23 up in order. The Motion to take up Warrant Article 23 next was seconded by Kermit Williams. The change in order was approved by voice vote.

23. Shall the town adopt the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB2) to allow official ballot voting on all issues before the town on the second Tuesday of March? (3/5-majority ballot vote required.)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Kermit Williams was the first of many to speak about this article as detailed below:

"This is our 260th Town Meeting. Just think – Wilton town meetings were held before the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution was signed, before the Revolutionary War; even before Dick Putnam's store opened! From meeting in a log cabin in Wilton Center to this beautiful high school gym with motion-sensitive lighting. At early town meetings, the motion-sensitive lighting was when someone opened the door and the wind blew the candles out.

But from the 1775 town meeting where citizens voted to send volunteers to Lexington and Concord, to today, town meeting has been a constant. Citizens joining with their neighbors to discuss and vote on what the town should do and how it should spend their money. Back and forth discussion is key – one person’s argument convinces others, and the vote is decided.

I would hate for our 260th town meeting to be our last. If this warrant article passes and we adopt SB2, that history is all gone. There will be a different process, but it will not be like this. Sure, things have changed over the years. We did not always have a projector and PowerPoint. However, some changes are good, and some are not. I will always miss Harry Dailey rising to say “Move the Question”, but I would hate to lose the event he was a key player in. Please vote “No” and make sure there is a 261st Wilton Town Meeting.”

Sara’s Spittel, 748 Isaac Frye Highway, next spoke to say it was extremely important Wilton voters decline to approve the SB2 Warrant Article. Her heartfelt words were:

“The first town meetings in NH can be traced to the 1630s. Nearly 400 years later we are STILL using this form of governance - because it has been time-proven to be SO effective in QUALITY collective decision making.

Town Meeting is an opportunity for us to come face to face to discuss and make binding decisions on the issues we have deemed to be most important to our town. It is equal parts information sharing, mutual respect, learning, ego bruising and drama. We do not all have the same opinions or views - but by listening to each other and sharing opinions we help educate each other to make decisions we believe are best for us as a collective community.

In an era where we are all becoming so highly individualized - when many voters are forming opinions at home behind their computer screen based on the leanings of perhaps only one source or political party - THIS method ensures neighbors become engaged in TRULY thoughtful discussion and decision making. It acknowledges our interdependence upon each other and makes sure that each voter makes a decision with ALL of the community’s input.

With the careful, impartial guidance of our respected moderator - discussion is channeled, emotions are guided, behavior is regulated...and free discussion and careful debate ensues. The moderator works to carefully to allow different sides of the presentation to be heard.

Each year, the number of residents attending Town Meeting varies. I know there are some that would like to vote that cannot attend - however, I truly believe voter turnout rates inherently show the level of interest of the items being discussed. Whether it is the building of a fire station, reconstruction of a bridge, purchase of conservation land, or the form of government itself we are voting to use - the

NUMBER of people coming to vote reflects how INTERESTED people are in the topics being considered.

I believe "One Stop Voting" LIMITS learning opportunities and increases blind voting decisions. Passing SB2 will contribute to the further deterioration of neighbors communicating with each other. Do we really want Facebook to become someone's only source of information about how they should vote? Because it has been proven over and over again how poor attendance is at deliberative sessions.

At Town Meeting there can be no calls of vote tampering, ballot box stuffing, or confusion on the issues at hand. This method of voting removes every one of those issues because of its transparency.

Instead of one elected official or Board telling us what will be done with our Town, WE are fortunate enough to come together. WE each get the opportunity to make the decisions TOGETHER as a COLLECTIVE unit. It is now more imperative than ever that we use this centuries-old method of decision making to hold together the fabric of our community.

I ask you to vote AGAINST Article 23 tonight."

Bart Hunter, 129 Davisville Road, spoke to say this article makes him angry. It is not appropriate, not thought out and should not have been presented before the voters tonight.

DJ Garcia, 126 Pead Hill, stated this article had been presented at the Budget Committee Public Hearing. No one in attendance supported the article and he hoped it would not be supported tonight.

Cary Hughes, 222 Isaac Frye Highway, said he teaches government to teenagers. Town Meeting is unique. It allows direct participation in democracy. Why give it up? It does takes time yes, but it is worth it. Keep your voice. Keep Town Meeting.

Ron Brown, 979 Isaac Frye Highway, spoke to say he agrees with the earlier speakers and that voting in SB2 would be like "drive by government. Vote no."

Lisa Tarbox, 209 Forest Road, asked for clarification. She asked wouldn't the SB2 Deliberative Session allow folks, who otherwise could not make it to this meeting, to be able to ask questions or amend a warrant? These same people would still be allowed to vote on warrant articles via a paper ballot.

Matt Fish summarized the history of how the SB2 vote came before the voters tonight. He explained the majority of the Board did not personally support the article but felt the questions should be put before the voters.

David McBee, 404 Eastview Drive, asked what SB2 is supposed to fix? What is the point in being able to vote privately? What does it accomplish? He did not support this article.

Neil Faiman, 24 Putnam Hill Road, spoke to say there are significant differences between Town Meeting and SB2. In the Town Meeting forum "I have to listen to you, and you have to listen to me."

Rebecca Kishinevisky, 38 Wilton Center Road, stated it would be a shame to the eliminate the Town Meeting system. She did suggest perhaps the date of Town Meeting could be moved to a Saturday to make it more accessible?

A motion to move the question was made and seconded from the floor.

Moderator Bill Keefe next read Article 23 as written. He then asked the voters to use their yes/no ballots and gave the usual instructions to property use these paper ballots. He further mentioned the polls were required to be kept open for one hour. The meeting would continue until the time requirement was met, votes tallied by the Supervisors of the Checklist, and then the result would be announced.

The polls were kept open for one hour. After the polls closed and the votes were tallied, the Moderator announced the paper ballot results. Paper ballots cast to adopt SB2 were 133 no and 6 yes. Article 23 does not pass.

Selectman Kermit Williams next spoke about Wilton's history of choosing a citizen of the year to be honored as follows:

"Almost every year, we choose someone as citizen of the year. It's a chance to recognize their contributions to the town, to appreciate their commitment. Rarely has the citizen of the year done more things for Wilton than this year's choice.

Some of her work is helping Wilton be greener. She is one of the coordinators of the Wilton Community Garden on Carnival Hill. She was an organizer for the once and future Souhegan Sustainability Fair, held right here in the high school. She is leading the effort to reopen the Still Good Shed at the Recycling Center. She picks up mountains of trash from Wilton's roadways, and raises money for good causes while doing it.

Some of her work is bringing people together. She is the coordinator for the Wilton Collaborative Space, which provides literally hundreds of opportunities for residents to learn something new, be entertained, or interact with each other. She helped with the long-running documentary film series at the Town Hall Theater, finding speakers to lead a discussion afterward. She and the Community Center group make stone soup every year in the downtown park. If you don't know what that is, make sure to attend. It's a great experience.

And some of her best work is music. She has played the dulcimer for many years, and you might have seen and heard her work all over the region. She coordinates the Wilton Folk Café, calls contra dances, and organizes concerts and open mike nights at the Wilton collaborative space.

She has taken training as an end-of-life doula and helps people through that difficult time. She helped Wilton establish a place for 'green burials, where your impact on the environment is minimized.

I've probably missed a bunch of things, but even reading all this makes me tired. I don't know how she does it all. Let's all give our appreciation to Sandy Lafleur for everything she does, and recognize her as our 2022 Citizen of the Year." Applause ensued.

Next the Select Board recognized Kellie-Sue Boissonnault for her service as Wilton's first female Select Board member. Applause again ensued.

21. To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate Ten Thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund (established in 1994 by Article #14). The monies to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this Article 6-1-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

After several general comments, the Moderator read the Article 21 as written. Article 21 was voice vote approved.

22. To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Wilton Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan, finalized on January 17, 2022, by the Wilton Community Power Aggregation Committee, and to further authorize the Select Board to develop and implement Wilton Community Power, and to take all action in furtherance of the Wilton Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan, pursuant to RSA 53-E. Said Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan has an "opt-out" clause and, if approved, default electricity shall be provided through Wilton Community Power, unless the customer opts out.

(Select Board recommends this Article 2-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Kermit Williams began by stating that voters tonight have been asked to spend money while this article can help save money. Before continuing, Kermit thanked the committee volunteers for all their interest and efforts. He went on to say:

"This article is based on a new state law that allows communities to do group buying of electricity for their residents. We know this works – the town is already in a group buying plan with other municipalities for the electricity town buildings use, and we saved thousands of dollars a year. Under this plan, the town coordinates the generation side of your electric bill. Eversource will still do the delivery of your electricity, and still fix the wires if they fail. They won't treat you any different, because Eversource already doesn't make the electricity you use – they just deliver it.

Under this plan, you will likely save 10-20% of the cost of electricity. If it doesn't save money, we won't do it, and everyone will stay with their current supplier. You will also have the chance to opt out of the plan at the beginning, or at any time after that. You will have complete control of where your electricity comes from. If you want to buy more renewable energy, you can make that choice under this plan.

With gasoline and heating prices rising, we are all going to pay more for energy. So let's choose to take advantage of the opportunity to get the best deal we can, and vote yes on this article."

Wilton Community Power Aggregation Committee Members, Gerry Humphrey, 104 Dale Street, Rick Lavelle, 67 Intervale Road, and Rachael Chumbley, 131 Dale Street all spoke supporting this article. Gerry Humphrey stated "this article won't cost money but will save money." Rick Lavelle stated "the City of Sommerville, MA, saved between 10%-20% in their municipality. This would equate to a free month of electricity. Who wouldn't like that benefit?"

Committee Member Rachael Chumbley supported this article by saying "there were no cons, no downsides, to this program. Individuals and businesses can benefit. It can help grow local business and provide cleaner energy." She concluded her comments by saying she hoped everyone would vote yes.

Kellie-Sue Boissonnault explained a post card will be sent to every Wilton household and the card requires a response. If residents do not respond they will automatically be enrolled into the program. If households are signed up, they can opt out of the program if they choose to do so.

Hearing no further comment, the Moderator read Article 22 as written. Article 22 was voice vote approved.

24. Shall the town modify the Veteran's Tax Credit in accordance with RSA 72:28, II from its current tax credit of Three Hundred Fifty dollars (\$350) per year to Five Hundred dollars (\$500) per year? (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Brad Volz, 57 Stiles Farm Road, made a motion to amend Article 23 the Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) to Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750). Motion to Amend was seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Robert Stelatto, 51 McGettigan Road, spoke on his own behalf and on behalf of the other 145 Wilton Veterans. He explained he and several other Veterans came before the Select Board on October 18th, 2021. At that meeting the Select Board voted to raise the Veterans Exemption from the current Three Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$350) to Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750). But later in January the Select Board recanted their vote, lowering the amount to Five Hundred Dollars (\$500). "They did so without telling anyone. This devalued the service given by the Veterans of Wilton." He concluded words by encouraging all voters to approve the motion to raise the exemption to the level originally supported (\$750).

Moderator Bill Keefe then read the motion to amend Article 24 to increase the Veterans Exemption to \$750. The motion to amend Article 24 was voice vote approved.

Following several more comments from the floor, Moderator Bill Keefe read Article 24, as amended. Article 24 as amended was voice vote approved.

25. Shall the Town adopt the provisions of RSA 72:37-b, Exemption for the Disabled from property tax, to be applied to the assessed value of a qualified, disabled taxpayer's principal place of abode, in an amount of Thirty-Thousand Dollars (\$30,000)? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) or if married, a combined net income of not more than Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000), and own net assets not in excess of Seventy-Thousand Dollars (\$70,000) for married persons, excluding the value of the person's residence. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this article 3-0-0)
(Budget Committee recommends this article 7-0-1)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Hearing no questions or discussions, Moderator Keefe read Article 25 as written. Article 25 was voice vote approved.

26. To see if the town will vote to authorize Fifty Percent (50%) up to Sixty-Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) of the Land Use Change Tax collected pursuant to RSA 79-A:25 to be deposited into the existing Conservation Fund in accordance with RSA

36-A:5, III, as authorized by RSA 79-A:25, II. If adopted, this Article shall take effect April 1st, 2022, and shall remain in effect until altered or rescinded by a future vote of the town meeting. (Majority vote required.)

(Select Board recommends this Article 3-0-0)

(Budget Committee does not recommend this Article (2-4-2)

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Jennifer Beck, 5 Tighe Farm Road, stated she has served on the Conservation Commission for the past seven years and feels strongly the voters should support this Warrant Article. She gave an overview of the history since the article was created in 2016.

“Current use is the most comprehensive and largest land protection program in the state. An increasing number of properties are coming out of current use and into development. We’ve reached the current cap on the conservation portion twice now and this will likely continue. By raising the cap to Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) we are also putting more money into an investment account. Open space costs nothing compared to developed lands, so this is a double benefit to residents – natural resources protection and cost savings. Public hearing and governing body approval are required for all expenditures, so this program has complete transparency regarding how those funds are allocated.

We’re building the machine that will allow Wilton to effectively compete for large federal and state funding. Having matching funds on hand is an essential component of that grant strategy.”

Cary Hughes, spoke “with his money hat on and as Chairman of Wilton Budget Committee.” He stated the Budget Committee has never supported raising the cap, neither in this warrant or in an earlier year when it had previously been proposed. He further said he supports land conservation but we also need to think about balance.

Jennifer Beck, 5 Tighe Farm Road, stated the Town Meeting schedule doesn't allow for flexibility when prospective land purchases become available.

Christine Keller, 605 Isaac Frye Highway, asked for clarification of the current breakdown. She asked if this would take away money that would otherwise go into the general fund but would now go to the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund. Select Board member Kermit Williams confirmed this would allow more funds to go to the Conservation Commission. He further explained Public Hearings would be held and the Select Board would be part of the process. Wilton taxpayers would have to make up the difference in revenue. “This is a choice for those who support land conservation. For those that do, they should vote yes.” For reference he cited Five Hundred, Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000) equals about One Dollar (\$1) on a tax bill. Forty Thousand Dollars

(\$40,000) would equal about Seven Cents (\$0.07) to Eight Cents (\$0.08) on a tax bill.

Tom Schultz, 122 Burton Highway, spoke to say "he is not for or against development. It's a matter that sometimes you have to say no!"

Neil Faiman, 24 Putnam Hill Road, stated "I've never seen a land purchase I didn't like." He planned to support this article. He asked the voters to think of it as an additional Forty Thousand Dollar (\$40) addition to the Conservation Commission Budget.

Alan Preston, 21 Frye Mill Road, next stated as a Conservation Commission member that these funds will allow us to have the opportunity to move forward on a piece of land if it becomes available. Tracts like the McGettigan or Tallarico land as examples. He also supported this article.

Bart Hunter, 129 Davisville Road, spoke as the former Conservation Commission Chairman for 14 years. He stated when land is taken out of Current Use there are impacts on town facilities such as Fire, Schools, and Recycling Center & Highway Departments just as examples. All costs money. He talked about the multiple Horseshoe lots located on Burns Hill Road. He explained when the land came on the market the funds were not in their account. The Town was unable to purchase the land and it sold to a private party.

Select Board member Matt Fish stated there were multiple ways to look at Current Use classified land. Our open space is an asset. He encouraged putting some money into this fund.

Moderator Bill Keefe then read Article 26 as written. Article 26 was voice vote approved.

27. To accept the report of Agents, Auditors and Committees or Officers heretofore chosen to pass any vote relating thereto.

Moved by Kermit Williams, seconded by Kellie-Sue Boissonnault.

Article 26 was voice vote approved

28. To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

Select Board member Kermit Williams asked for a non-binding straw poll vote showing who would support a Saturday Town Meeting. The non-binding hand count showed the majority of voters in attendance supported a Saturday Town Meeting.

Selectman Matt Fish next asked for a non-binding straw poll regarding reservoir parking. Would the voters support Wilton residents only to be able to use the

parking? The straw poll outcome showed support for this idea.

A motion to adjourn was moved and seconded. The 2022 Wilton Town Meeting adjourned by voice vote at 10:14 P.M.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jane K. Farrell" followed by the date "4/28/2022".

Jane K. Farrell
Town Clerk & Tax Collector