



**Fall Town Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 7:00pm  
Historic Old Town Hall**

**Greetings:**

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of the Town of Pelham, Massachusetts, qualified to vote in the Town affairs to meet in the Pelham Historic Old Town Hall, located at the intersection of Route 202 and Amherst Road in said Pelham on Wednesday, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, in the year A.D. 2015 at 7:00 pm for the reading of the Town Warrant and to proceed with the meeting. Warrant signed by the Select Board Sept 25, 2015 and posted Sept 28, 2015 by Constable Donald G. Clark

49 Voters were in attendance as checked by Registrar Sharrie Reydak

Fall Town Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Constable Donald G. Clark

The Town Clerk Kathleen Martell welcomed everyone and explained that the Town Moderator was unable to attend the meeting. So according to MGL Chapter 41 Section 14, it requires that the Town Clerk presides over the Town Meeting until a Temporary Town Moderator is elected to server.

Accordingly the first order of business theretofore would be to elect a Temporary Moderator to preside for the remainder of this Town Meeting.

The Town Clerk understands that Joseph Larson is willing and able to perform the duties of Temporary Moderator tonight. For the election the Town Meeting is required to conduct, the person receiving the majority of votes of those present is declared the winner. Therefore if only one person is nominated then only one vote will be required to elect the temporary moderator. Joseph Larson was nominated to act as Temporary Moderator and was seconded. No other nominations were made. Nominations were closed and Mark Santos, Board of Selectmen Chair, cast one ballot for Joseph Larson. It was seconded and passed unanimously. Joseph Larson was declared Temporary Moderator and was sworn in to his duties.

Joseph Larson took over the meeting and noted this meeting is in the oldest town hall in continuous use in the United States. He proceeded to give a short history lesson of the invitation by the Selectmen of Pelham to all others in Hampshire County which lit the fuse for Daniel Shays Rebellion and ultimately led to the drafting of the US Constitution. Then he proceeded to the business of the meeting. He elected to move Article 4 to the end of the other articles, since he is on the Community Preservation Committee so the Town Council, Katharine Kline said he could not moderate Article 4.

**Article 1. Read in its entirety**

The Town will vote to appropriate from the Capital Equipment Stabilization Fund the sum of \$115,000 to pay off the loan authorized at the May 2015 Town Meeting to purchase and equip a new loader/backhoe. A two-thirds vote required is (G.L. c.40, §5B)..Motion made and seconded. John Trickey, Finance Committee chair spoke that it was to pay for the loader/backhoe that needed to be ordered, but was part of the Capital Equipment plan. **Vote was Unanimous in Favor**

**Article 2. Read in its entirety**

The Town will vote to appropriate from the Capital Equipment Stabilization Fund the sum of \$15,000 for repairs to the 2003 Sterling dump truck. Two-Thirds Vote Required (G.L. c.40, §5B)  
Motion made and seconded. John Trickey spoke that the repairs are intended to increase its active life by approximately 5 years. The amount of money here appropriated won't entirely cover the repairs needed. Discussion included where extra money would come from and John Trickey answered From Capital Stabilization . **Vote was declared Unanimous in Favor**

### **Article 3. Read in its entirety**

The Town will vote to accept the provisions of G.L. c.44, §53F¾ (inserted by c.352 of the Acts of 2014) for the purpose of establishing a separate revenue account (a receipts reserved for appropriation account) to be known as the "PEG Access and Cable Related Fund", into which shall be deposited cable television license proceeds, which funds may be appropriated by Town Meeting for cable-related purposes in accordance with law, including, but not limited to: (1) support of public, educational, or governmental ("PEG") access cable television services; (2) monitoring compliance of the cable operator with the cable television license(s); or (3) preparing for the renewal of the cable license(s); and, in connection therewith, to transfer to said fund a sum of money equal to the cable-related receipts now held by the Town, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to expend said sum for the aforesaid cable-related purposes. William Martell Select Board spoke. This is because of a change in MA laws and DOR reporting. He said that the amount we get from Comcast each year is about \$11,000. The money was used for IT needs and usually about 50% to the school. There will need to be a warrant article at ATM to specify the spending. John Trickey said that the school replaced all of the computers and white board area. The library may need computers next year. **Vote was declared Unanimous in Favor**

### **Article 5. Read in its entirety**

The Town will vote to act on the August 27, 2015 report of the School Committee Stipend Study Group, which committee was created by the Board of Selectmen as directed by the May 2, 2015 Annual Town Meeting, and, in connection therewith, to raise and appropriate or transfer a sum of money for purposes of reimbursing School Committee members for travel outside of the Town of Pelham. (A copy of the School Committee Stipend Study Committee Report signed by Chairman Blair Bigelow was available.) Joe Larson Temporary Moderator outlined Article 5. It came from May ATM discussion and motion. Blair Bigelow was present. There was a question why the Committee recommended no stipend. Twenty seven towns were contacted by the committee to find out information on School Committee stipends in their towns. And the School Committee didn't recommend the stipend. The Pelham Select Board did not recommend it. Cynthia Weigel questioned the reimbursement for only such short travel to Amherst for School Committee meetings. Blair said that the end there was a discussion about maybe being paid for travel. But he felt that the report was for the Selectmen and didn't know the report would be a warrant article. He said yes it seemed like nickel and diming to pay for short distance travel. Another way to do this would be if the School Committee wants it in the ATM budget in May. Tom Fanning Wondered about the hours involved. Assumed it would spend the same amount of time as others on the committee and Amherst has no stipend. School Committee has at least one local meeting and one regional meeting but other times have many more meetings. Other discussion included mileage estimates for data but the Study Committee had completed its duties. Bruce Klotz wondered what the sum of money would amount to if decided to pay stipends. Ruth Elcan said there is an issue of process. It should be brought in by the school committee, and they should provide the "plea". John Trickey said if the School Committee members want mileage and/or stipend they can come to the Finance Committee and then to Annual Town meeting. It should bring in money requests as all budget request are processed. Blair Bigelow said that he agreed the budget process would be the way to go and the Study Committee position was a little uncomfortable due to the issue being up in the air more like a philosophical decision. Cynthia Weigel said it was a process issue. There is so much volunteerism in town that we need to look at all committees. She said Dana MacDonald works 10 or more hours a week and it makes historic town changes. Suggested Dan Robb had a conflict of interest on the article. Do we really want to turn the town from Volunteerism to paid personnel. Nora Maroulis said we should vote yes or no but need clarification do we vote on acting or not or vote yes on mileage or no opposed. Point of order motion made to vote yes to pay or no not to pay seconded. **Vote was UNANIMOUS OPPOSED**

### **Article 6. Read in its entirety Two-Thirds Vote Required (G.L. c.41, §108)**

The Town will vote to provide compensation for School Committee members for Fiscal Year 2016, and as funding therefore, to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sum of money for such purposes. The Selectmen did not recommend because they felt it should be requested by School Committee. Jeff Eiseman said he had a history lesson. In the 70's he was on the School Committee and they were paid \$25.00 for two members and \$50.00 for the chair. And it was deleted as it didn't really

matter much. Tom Fanning agreed the School Committee should bring it up. But would be interested to know the amount of time required to do the School Committee job , hours and hours of meetings, or maybe the nature of the job of School Committee is different from other committees in town. Then there is the other thing of turnover in School committee members compared to other boards including labor relations. Jeff Eiseman said that at the risk of ending relationships, many people have put in many hours n serving and learning that is just how it is. So this process the Select Board left the decision to the town. Blair Bigelow said they checked other towns in regional schools and they don't pay . There is no pattern of payment and more than half that answered said no stipends. Abigail Jenks Called the question. All were in favor. Vote to give compensation no means no compensation . **Vote was UNANIMOUS**

#### **OPPOSED**

Joseph Larson completed his part as temporary moderator. Town Clerk presided over the nomination election of Joseph (Jay) Leonard as temporary Moderator for Article 4 .

#### **Article 4. Read in its entirety**

The Town will vote to appropriate from the Fund Balance of the Community Preservation Fund the sum of \$30,000, as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, to hire a professional consultant(s) to assist the Pelham Housing Committee in developing an analysis and inventory of land suitable for affordable housing. Dana MacDonald Chairman of the CPC Committee spoke. The Housing Needs Study which is then followed by this study which is more about affordable housing issues like duplexes. New housing Committee introduced. Jim Lumley Chairman, Ruth Elcan, Gail Kenny, Mollye Wollahan and Tilman Lukas. Nancy Doubleday asked what land they were looking at. Tilman Lukas said they initially decided to hire a consultant to help decide the areas town wide.....the town center near the library municipal building and open space, and who votes on the town center as that area in conjunction with the planning board. There is a need for affordable housing. The Zoning Board and the Board of Health will have an impact. Donald Clark remarked that is 50% of Pelham . The Quabbin took at the top of the hill and moved the cemetery across Rt 202 he wondered why everything has to be next to Amherst. Why the Center of Town needs to be crammed down by the police station when it is beautiful at the top of the hill. Abigail Jenks of Planning Board stated this issue should not get sidetracked by the Town Center issue. Sewer and water is available downhill. John Crispin questioned the \$30,000. Other town Housing Study didn't use all the money last time. Question about affordable housing means considering seniors too? Joe Larson stated every time a study was done questions of residents issues felt need to help elderly people stay in their own homes and how can it be affordable for young families to live in Pelham. Connie Kreuger did the first study which showed number of facilities in nearby towns, the restricted sewer and no public transportation so no developer would build in Pelham. Joe Larson said except from Habitat for Humanity the question of duplex houses unlikely. Could use CPA money to maybe acquire parcel of land, but there are a lot of wet lands and 3 protected watersheds need long term commitment. Jeff Eiseman questions if new dimensions study considered or if developers pay for study, step in manuals of CPA study to see what is feasible. John Rodkey said we need some direction, the "trailer Park" is an eyesore. What do we get for \$30,000 in study of affordable housing; but that could pay someone's taxes. Tilman Lukas said that surveys in the past were done pre GIS systems. What if sewer line came then could draw squares that could be house lots. Now we can do a comprehensive study and canvas every property in town and include the Conservation Commission for wetlands and include where sewer lines are now. Committee is still working on the questions they need to ask and need to do a RFP (request for proposal) for better proposal. Discussion ended

**Vote was declared Unanimous in Favor**

**Motion to adjourn at 8:00 PM seconded. passed**