

**MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MAY 15, 2006**

At a legal meeting of voters of the Town of Sterling qualified to vote in town affairs held on Monday the 15th day of May at seven (7:00) o'clock in the evening at the Chocksett School on Boutelle Road, the registrars checked in 194 of the 5279 registered voters of the town. The Moderator, Peter Monaghan called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited. Counters sworn in were Robert "Duffy" Lanciani, William Brassard, Tom Kokernack and Robert Kneeland.

ARTICLE 1. Voted to raise by taxation and appropriate the sum of \$7,856,278.00 and to further appropriate, from the EMS Receipts Account, the sum of \$270,118.00, with \$6,000.00 of this amount to be added to the DPW Expense Line to cover fuel cost for the Ambulances, or any other sum for the payment of salaries and compensation, payment of debt and interest and for charges, expenses and outlays of the Town departments, for the ensuing fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2007.

PASSED MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 2. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$28,948.00 to fund two full-time Police Officer positions with \$5,948.00 to be added to Article One of this Town Meeting Warrant to the Police Wages line item and \$23,000.00 to be added to the Workers Comp/Medicare/ Liability, Group Insurances and Unemployment Expense line of the same Article One of this Town Meeting.

PASSED MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 3. Voted to fund for the first time the full-time Administrative Assistant position within the Fire Department, as created by Article #1 of the May 2005 Annual Town Meeting, by raising and appropriating the sum of \$15,253.00, \$9,503.00 of which is to be added to Article #1 of this meeting "Fire Wages" line item and \$5,750.00 of which to be added to Article #1 "Workers Comp/Medicare/ Liability, Group Insurances and Unemployment Expense" line item and also to transfer from the EMS Receipts Account the sum of \$12,763.00, \$7,013.00 of which to be added to Article #1 "EMS Wages" line item and \$5,750.00 to the "EMS Expenses" line item. The remainder of the first year wages for this position is to come from other funds voted in Article #1 for Fire and EMS wages.

PASSED MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 4. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,192.00 to fund a new Mechanic Position within the DPW, \$38,692.00 of which to be added to Article #1 "DPW Wages" line item and \$11,500.00 of which to be added to "Workers Comp/Medicare/ Liability, Group Insurances and Unemployment Expense" line item.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 5. Voted to raise and appropriate \$554,545.00 in accordance with Section 16B of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as amended, and Section #4C and E of the Montachusett Regional Vocational School District Agreement for its share of operational and capital costs of the Montachusett Regional Vocational School District, and to transfer, from the Capital Fund, the sum of \$11,326.00, for the purpose of paying the Town's portion of the debt and interest for the Montachusett Regional High School Building Project for a total appropriation of \$565,871.00.

PASSED

2/3rds VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 6. Voted, as amended, to raise and appropriate \$7,450,327.00, which is equal to Sterling's net minimum contribution, as provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, plus the cost of Sterling's share of WRSD transportation costs and our portion of the WRSD debt and interest costs, in accordance with Section 16B of Chapter 71 of the General Laws, as amended, and Section #4 of the Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as amended, for its share of operational costs and of debt and interest charges of the Wachusett Regional School District.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 7. Voted, as amended, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$819,440.00 above the net mini- mum contribution as requested by the Wachusett Regional School District.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 8. Voted to fix the salaries and compensation of all elected officers of the Town as pro- vided by Section 108 of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, as amended, and as voted in Article #1 of this warrant.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 9. Voted to set the salary of the Municipal Light Board as follows: Chairman \$600; Clerk \$600; Third member \$600; said sum to be an expense of the Municipal Light Department.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 10. Voted to include in the tax levy for electricity used for street lights the sum of \$26,294 and that said sum and the income from the sale of electricity to private consumers or for electricity supplied to municipal buildings or for municipal power, and for jobbing and other revenues during the current fiscal year, be appropriated for the Municipal Lighting Plant or Department, the whole to be expended by the Manager of municipal lighting under the direction and control of the Municipal Light Board for the expense of the Plant or Department for the said fiscal year, as defined in Section 57 of Chapter 164 of the Massachusetts General Laws or any other appropriate sections or chapters, and that this sum and said income shall exceed said expense for said fiscal year, such excess shall be transferred to the Depreciation Fund, Construction Fund or any fund of said Department and appropriated and used for the purpose of maintaining the Plant or Department thereto as may thereafter be authorized by the Municipal Light Board.

Kenneth Williams moved on words of the article with a reduction in the printed figure from 30,000 to \$26,294.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 11. Voted to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2006, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 4, of the General Laws, as amended, and to renew any note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 17, of the General Laws, as amended.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 12. To see if the Town will vote to accept Chapter 44, Section 53F of the General Laws, as amended, authorizing the Town Treasurer/Collector to enter into a compensating balance agreement or agreements, for FY2007.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 13. Voted to raise, from water revenue, and appropriate \$748,532.00 to operate the Water Department. The Finance Committee recommends that the following sums be appropriated to operate the water department:

Salaries	\$166,020.00
Expenses	\$198,950.00
Debt & Interest	<u>\$310,568.00</u>
Subtotal	\$675,538.00
Indirect Costs	<u>\$ 72,994.00</u>
Total	<u>\$748,532.00</u>

\$748,532.00 to come from water revenue with \$72,994.00 of that amount to be appropriated to the Town's general fund.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 14. Vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,250 for hydrant rental, said sum to be paid to the DPW and used as revenue for the Water Department.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 15. Voted to raise and appropriate \$7,500.00 to fund the Senior Citizen Work-Off Abatement Program for fiscal year 2007.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 16. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00, to be used for expenses for Wachusett Greenways, a six Town collaborative, said funds to be administered and expended by Wachusett Greenways.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 17. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500.00 to be used for expenses for The Sterling Land Trust, an organization dedicated to the preservation of various parcels of land within the Town, said funds to be administered and expended by the Trust.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 18. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000.00 to fund the Reserve Fund for fiscal year 2007 in accordance with the provisions of General Law Chapter 40, Section 6, as amended.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 19. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 to fund the maintenance of the 1835 Town Hall for fiscal 2007, said sum to be expended by the 1835 Town Hall Committee.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 20. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,573.00 as the Town's 5% match for a Federal Fire Act Grant applied for by the Fire Department for an upgrade to the current Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (S.C.B.A.) valued at \$51,460.00.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 21. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000.00 for Alum treatment, testing and a progress report for East Lake Washacum with the funds to be expended by the Conservation Commission.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 22. Voted to transfer from the Capital Fund the sum of \$90,345.00 to the General Fund to offset the cost of the Fire Truck debt and interest for fiscal 2007.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 23: Voted to transfer from the Capital Fund the sum of \$75,000.00 to fund the necessary improvements to upgrade the Police Department's communication system.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 24: Voted to transfer from the Capital Fund the sum of \$130,000 to purchase a new loader with all other pertinent attachments and equipment and to authorize the payment of the purchase price in part from proceeds of the trade in or auction of a 1995 Volvo L70C front end loader and the balance in cash out of said appropriation, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 25: Voted to transfer from the Capital Fund, the sum of \$16,400.00 to purchase an alarm monitoring system and appurtenant equipment for the second phase of this system installation.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 26: Voted to adopt Chapter 137 of the Acts of 2003 of Massachusetts as amended by Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2005 relating to salaries of public employees serving in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 27: Voted in accordance with M.G.L. c.40, section 4A, authorize the Board of Health and/or Health agent to enter into an inter-municipal agreement with one or more other governmental units to provide public health services which the Board of Health is authorized to perform, in accordance with an Inter-Municipal Mutual Aid Agreement to be entered into between the Town and various governmental units.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

Motion made & second to consider consent agenda for articles 28- 35

Motion carried by majority vote

ARTICLE 28 - 35 VOTED UNDER CONSENT AGENDA

ARTICLE 28: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for the purpose of a Hazardous Materials Recovery Revolving Account, into which account receipt for charges to responsible parties for the containment of hazardous materials pursuant to the Town's Hazardous Materials and Waste Recovery By-law shall be deposited and to authorize the Fire Chief to expend funds received and deposited into said account. The total amount, which may be expended in the current fiscal year, shall not exceed \$15,000.00

ARTICLE 29: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for the purposes of administering the Deputy Tax Collector fees and the amount spent from this account is not to exceed \$15,000 in the fiscal year said amount to be under the control of the Treasurer/Collector.

ARTICLE 30: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for the purpose of collecting fees and revenue income to de- fray the expenses of the 1835 Town Hall, and to be used for its upkeep, the amount spent from this account is not to exceed \$15,000.00 within the fiscal year, with said account to be under the control of the Town Hall Committee,

ARTICLE 31: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½, of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for the purpose of collecting Planning Board Fees not covered by other General Laws and using said funds for the operation of the Planning Board, the amount spent from this account is not to exceed \$35,000.00 within the fiscal year, with said account to be under the control of the Planning Board.

ARTICLE 32: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for Council on Aging said account to be used for the purpose of expenses, contractual services, and equipment for COA related programs, the amount spent from this account is not to exceed \$25,000 within the fiscal year, with this account to be under the control of the Council on Aging.

ARTICLE 33: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½ of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, for the purposes of running the Fair, which the amount spent from this account is not to exceed \$125,000 within the fiscal year, said account to be used to receive funds for and to pay the expenses of the Town fair, with this account to be under the control of the Fair Committee, or take any action in relation thereto.

ARTICLE 34: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the General Laws, as amended, for the purpose of Recycling, the amount spent from this account not to exceed \$125,000.00 within the fiscal year, with said account to be under the control of the Department of Public Works.

ARTICLE 35: Voted to continue a Revolving Account as allowed by Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the General Laws, as amended, for the purpose of providing a Fuel Revolving Fund, the amount spent from this account not to exceed \$50,000 within the fiscal year, said account to be used for the purchase and accounting of fuel for the various Town departments with said account to be under the control of the Fire Department.

ARTICLES 28 THRU 35

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 36: Voted to appropriate the sum of \$255,557.00, contingent upon the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' funding of the Chapter 90 program, said sum to be reimbursed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for highway resurfacing and/or other related work or expenditures as allowed by the State Chapter 90 regulations, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works.

Motion made to amend wording on article. Amendment defeated. Vote then taken on main article.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 37. Voted to borrow from available funds a sum of \$200,000 to be used in conjunction with money approved in Article 40 of the Fiscal Year 2006 Annual Town Meeting held on May 16, 2005 to install three new wells and a UV disinfection system at the Route 12 well field, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works.

Motion made to table article until accurate figures were received. Motion defeated.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 38. Voted to raise and appropriate from available funds the sum of \$10,000 to pay for the painting of centerlines on Town roads, said sum to be expended by the Department of Public Works.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

ARTICLE 39. Voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000.00, as a portion of the sum needed to be used with funds already appropriated, to pay the cost of the work necessary to provide for the ongoing revaluation and the annual operation of the Assessors' department, said sum to be expended by the Board of Assessors for said purposes.

PASSED

MAJORITY VOTE

Article 40 & 41 missing due to typographical error in warrant.

ARTICLE 42. Voted to accept Ridgewood Drive as a public way, in its entirety, together with all drainage easements, as laid out and shown on a plan on file with the Town Clerk's Office; such acceptance will not be final until any remaining punch list work has been completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Board, the As-Built Plan and the Deed(s), to the aforesaid have been recorded in the Worcester Registry of Deeds by the current owner(s) or their representative(s) and duly delivered along with clear title to the Board of Selectmen.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 43. Voted to accept Evergreen Circle (Extension) as a public way, in its entirety, together with all drainage easements, as laid out and shown on a plan on file with the Town Clerk's Office; such acceptance will not be final until any remaining punch list work has been completed to the satisfaction of the Planning Board, the As-Built Plan and the Deed(s), to the aforesaid have been recorded in the Worcester Registry of Deeds by the current owner(s) or their representative(s) and duly delivered along with clear title to the Board of Selectmen.

PASSED

2/3RDS VOTE DECLARED BY MODERATOR

ARTICLE 44. Voted to elect by ballot on Monday, May 22, 2006, at 7:00 AM at the Houghton School on Boutelle Road, the following officers:

- One Selectman to serve for three years
- One Assessor to serve for three years
- One Moderator to serve for three years
- One Health Board Member to serve for three years
- Two Library Trustees to serve for three years
- One Library Trustee to serve for two years
- One Public Works Board Member to serve for three years
- One Light Board Member to serve for three years
- One Planning Board Member to serve for five years
- One Housing Authority Member to serve for five years
- One Housing Authority member to serve for four years
- One Wachusett School Committee Member to serve for two years
- One Wachusett School Committee Member to serve for three years

Also to choose by ballot or otherwise, such other officers as may be necessary and to act on the following Questions:

Question #1 Shall Sterling accept section 3 to 7 inclusive, of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, in accordance with the summary which appears below?

Sections 3 to 7 of Chapter 44B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, also known as the Community Preservation Act, establish a dedicated funding source to acquire and preserve open space, parks, and conservation land, protect public drinking water supplies and scenic areas, protect farmland and forests from future development, restore and preserve historic properties, and help meet local families' housing needs.

In Sterling, the Community Preservation Act will be funded by an additional surcharge of 1.9% on the annual property tax assessed on real property beginning in the 2007 Fiscal Year, and by matching funds provided by the state. The following exemption shall be permitted:

Property owned and occupied as a domicile by any person who qualifies for low-income housing or low or moderate-income senior housing in the Town, as defined in Section 2 of said Act.

Any other taxpayer receiving a regular property tax abatement or exemption will also receive a corresponding full or partial reduction in the surcharge. A Community Preservation Committee will be established by local bylaw to study community preservation resources, possibilities, and needs and to make recommendations to Town Meeting on spending the funds. At least 10% of the funds for each fiscal year will be spent or reserved for later spending on each of the Act's three community preservation purposes: open space, historic resources, and affordable housing.

Yes ___
No ___

The polls shall be opened on Monday, May 22, 2005 at ten (7:00) o'clock in the forenoon and shall remain open until eight (8:00) o'clock in the evening.

Motion made and 2nd to adjourn to the election on May 22, 2006. Business portion of Town Meeting dissolved at 9:38pm

Respectfully submitted

Melanie J. Clark
Town Clerk