

Town of Whitefield
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES
2023

Moderator Waystack called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Moderator Waystack led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator Waystack introduced the head table.

Moderator Waystack announced the election results:

Article 01. The polls were opened at 8:00 o'clock in the forenoon by Moderator Waystack and closed at 6:00 o'clock in the afternoon. The results being as follows:

Moderator (Two-Year Term)	Phil Waystack – 224 votes
Selectperson (Three-Year Term)	Shawn White – 193 votes
Treasurer (Three-Year Term)	Kathleen S. Dunlap – 236 votes
Library Trustees (Two,Three-Year Terms)	Beth Anderson – 211 votes Sondra Brekke – 173 votes
Cemetery Trustee (Three-Year Term)	Edgar Cormier – 3 votes
Trustee of Trust Funds (Three-Year Term)	Celinda Laflamme – 3 votes

Article 02 Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Whitefield Development Code as follows: Amend the definition of "temporary structure" in Appendix I to mean structures with no permanent foundations or footings which are not intended to be permanent and which are intended to be used between four days and one year, to clarify that portable storage containers are not temporary structures, and to add a requirement that temporary structures in place for more than one year are permanent structures requiring a Development Permit?

The article passed:
Yes – 123 No - 116

Article 03 Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Whitefield Development Code as follows: Delete and replace the current definition of "campground" to mean "a parcel of land or premises with more than two sites, with or without water, electricity and sewage hookups, that is used or occupied for compensation by campers traveling by passenger vehicles and utilizing tents, campers, travel trailers, or any other recreational vehicles"?

**The article passed:
Yes - 148 No - 91**

Article 04 Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Whitefield Development Code as follows: adding a definition to Appendix I for "portable storage container," requiring a Development Permit for placement of a portable storage container if on the property for more than 60 days, adding portable storage containers to the list of included items in the definition of "structure" in Appendix I, and amending Section 7.1 (list of commercial activities) to include the sale or rental of portable storage containers, whether for on-site use or to be moved to a customer's property?

**The article failed:
No - 123 Yes - 113**

Article 05 Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Whitefield Development Code as follows: To amend Section 10.1 (Residential Activity) by deleting "boarding & rooming home"?

**The article passed:
Yes - 114 No - 102**

Article 06 Zoning Amendment

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 5 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Whitefield Development Code as follows: Adding a new Section 7.2(g), Short-term Rental, to require compliance with applicable National Fire Protection Association codes and State-adopted Healthy Home requirements, to provide that only rooms identified on the Development Permit application as sleeping areas shall be used as such, to require Fire Chief inspection of sleeping areas, to require occupancy levels to be consistent with approved NHDES septic design for the property, to set parking requirements consistent with occupancy levels as calculated for other commercial lodging categories, and requiring current NH Rooms and Meals Tax number?

**The article passed:
Yes - 145 No - 91**

Article 07 Operating Budget

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,352,279 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

General Government - \$668,049

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of General Government in the amount of \$668,049.**

Public Safety - \$1,135,376

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. A motion was made by Shawn White to amend (reduce) the Public Safety budget amount by \$10,000 to \$1,125,376. The motion was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion on the amendment. Shawn said we are reducing the Police Department budget by \$10,000 to correct a mathematical error in the Departmental Supplies line item. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the amendment to reduce the Public Safety Budget by \$10,000 to make it \$1,125,376.** The floor was opened for discussion on the article as amended. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Public Safety in the amount of \$1,125,376.**

Airport Operations - \$9,000

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Airport Operations in the amount of \$9,000.**

Highways & Streets - \$829,463

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Highways & Streets in the amount of \$829,463.**

Sanitation - \$228,300

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Sanitation in the amount of \$228,300.**

Health Officer/Animal Control - \$6,345

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Health Officer/Animal Control in the amount of \$6,345**

Welfare Direct Assistance - \$26,000

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Welfare Direct Assistance in the amount of \$26,000.**

Culture & Recreation - \$176,925

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Culture & Recreation in the amount of \$176,925.**

Conservation Commission & Economic Development - \$8,500

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. Terry Lufkin thanked Shawn White for his service as Selectman for the past three years. Terry Lufkin made a motion to amend the WEDC budget from \$6,000 to \$2,500. The motion was seconded from the floor. She said with the new increases with water and sewer and other additional increases including, electric and fuel, it is becoming a huge burden to run a small business. Just this past month, the floral business off Jefferson Road announced they were closing down due to increased costs, and they were hauling their own water. The money for WEDC is to have NCIC write a grant to get a grant for water at the industrial park. Terry said the only jobs that have been created are at NCIC and Horizons Engineering. The town has been paying all the legal costs incurred by the WEDC. They don't have to show any accountability for their funds as a non-profit group. Terry said we should not be subsidizing a new business while our current businesses are struggling to stay open. Katy Kopp President of WEDC said thank you for the amount of money the town has appropriated in past years. She said that WEDC is trying to create new money and new jobs. Katy wants to clarify that most of the money spent on the industrial park study has been grant money. To create jobs is a mission of the WEDC. Katy knows most businesses who are looking for property don't look where they have to expend money for water and sewer infrastructure. It has to be more attractive to bring in business. Katy said she wanted to clarify that this is not on the taxpayer's shoulders. Terry Lufkin said the \$6,000 that is going to be raised tonight is the taxpayer's money, and the money that was spent previously is also coming out of the \$100,000 that was raised two years ago with the grant match capital reserve account, and that is taxpayer's money as well. Shawn said that \$14,600 was paid out of the grant match capital reserve account for the WEDC Industrial Park project to Horizons Engineering. **The amendment to reduce the WEDC budget from \$6,000 to \$2,500 failed by a show of voting cards.** The floor was open for discussion on the original amount for \$8,500. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Conservation Commission and Economic Development in the amount of \$8,500**

Debt Service - \$77,518

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Debt Service in the amount of \$77,518.**

Sewer Department - \$643,638

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. Ed Betz said yesterday afternoon the community power coalition took bids on electricity for their town's energy, and got a bid of .158 , a 22% savings on energy. The town spends \$115,000 between water and sewer, which is a lot of money. There are 30 other towns who want to join the coalition. Ed would urge the Board to look into that. Ed was involved in a wastewater treatment plant in Peterborough, similar to Whitefield's treatment plant, and they have high energy costs. They put in a solar array that pays for the electricity for the entire plant and then sell back in the grid the excess power. Shawn White said the selectboard did sign a contract in the last month that will reduce our electrical costs for the next three years. Shawn said we are still going ahead with the solar arrays for the town hall, library, and fire station that were approved at last year's town meeting. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Sewer Department in the amount of \$643,638.**

Water Department - \$543,165

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. David Clifford said he used to have good water, but since our e-coli breakout last fall, there has been a chlorine taste to his water. How long do we have to suffer with that chlorine? He said he cannot drink the town water, and is buying bottled water. He assumes the state is mandating this. He is aware that the town has ignored state mandates in the past. How long do we have to do put up with this and have to buy bottled water? Shawn said he seconds that. His daughter was complaining about the chlorine taste just yesterday. We are under regulations with NH DES, and the water has to be chlorinated. Once we don't have to, we won't. We, the Board, aren't happy with it as well. Rob Larson, PW Director, said we have tried twice to get DES to let us not chlorinate. We had e-coli at one location. Five other locations tested were fine, but DES didn't care. We felt it was a bad sample, but we are mandated by the state to chlorinate. We are going to work with Horizons Engineer to relocate our testing site, which happens to be inside a commercial dwelling. We hopefully will have this accomplished by the end of 2023. **A show of voting cards was in favor of Water Department in the amount of \$543,165.**

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard and seconded by Shawn White to approve the Operating Budget Appropriations in the amount of \$4,342,279. Floor was opened for discussion. A show of voting cards was in favor of the Operating Budget Appropriations in the amount of \$4,342,279.

Moderator Waystack explained the election inspection process that occurred last fall during the state elections. Both inspections went well, and the inspectors were very satisfied with Whitefield's election process. Moderator Waystack wanted to thank our election workers who show up early in the morning and stay late at night. These people give their time and effort: Kathy Dunlap, Ann Marie Devin, Sondra Brekke, Bruce Brekke, Scott Burns, Jennifer Burns, Katie Burns, Jack Rode, Bill Jones, Maryclare Quigley, Barbara Pinkham, Jean Bergin, Lee Petruk, Candace Black, Teresa Russo, Sandy McKay, Barbara Hanson, Tina Wright, Town Clerk.

Article 08 Fire Department Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars {\$40,000} to be added to the Fire Department Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund created in 2007. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$40,000.**

Article 09 Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund created in 2015. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$15,000.**

Article 10 Road Projects Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) to be added to the Road Projects Capital Reserve Fund created in 2013. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$60,000.**

Article 11 Sidewalk Repair/Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the Sidewalk Repair/Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund created in 2011. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. David Clifford said, as a Maple Street resident, he would like to thank the Board to have enough foresight to do something about the hideous sidewalks. The common sidewalks are great, and there are actually tables for people to sit at. He would like to see the town do more improvements and it starts with the ground up. He would like to see the Town common be the center place and suggested the Town think about the idea of getting the power lines off the common. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$20,000.**

Article 12 Highway Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund

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 Highway Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund created in 2001. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$85,000.**

Article 13 Recycling Center Equipment Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Recycling Center Equipment Capital Reserve Fund created in 2012. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$5,000.**

Article 14 Emergency Services Building Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the Emergency Services Building Capital Reserve Fund created in 2019. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$20,000.**

Article 15 Highway Garage Repair/Replacement Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Highway Garage Repair/Replacement Capital Reserve Fund created in 2021. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$25,000.**

Article 16 Sewer Collection System Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Sewer Collection System Capital Reserve Fund created in 2019. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$10,000.**

Article 17 Solar Energy Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) to be added to the Solar Energy Capital Reserve Fund created in 2022. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen)(Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. It was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$1,000.**

Article 18 Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars(\$30,000) to be added to the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2004. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. It was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$30,000.**

Article 19 Purchase Police Cruiser

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) for the purpose of purchasing a police cruiser with \$25,000 to come from the 12/31/2022 unassigned fund balance, and \$35,000 to come from taxation. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (Majority vote required)

A motion was made by Shawn White to move the question. It was seconded by John Tholl. The floor was opened for discussion. Shawn White said there will be two new cruisers this year. One of the cruisers was destroyed when it caught fire due to an electrical issue. It was the 2019 cruiser. We

obtained \$35,000 from the insurance company, which left \$25,000 to come up with which the board as agents to expend approved. This article approves a cruiser that will replace the cruiser that is supposed to be replaced this year. This is the reason you will see two new cruisers this year. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$60,000.**

Article 20 Union Street Upgrade Project Engineering & Design

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the purpose of engineering, planning, and design of drainage upgrades to Union Street, View Street, Cherry Street, and Greenwood Street, and to authorize the issuance of not more than One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the municipal officials to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and to further authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan. Repayment of the loans will include up to 100% forgiveness of loan principal in an amount up to \$100,000. This article is contingent upon the Town receiving loan forgiveness from CWSRF in the amount of \$100,000. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen)(3/5 secret ballot vote required).

A motion was made by Abbey Querrard to move the question. The motion was seconded by Shawn White. The floor was opened for discussion. Shawn said we were fortunate to receive \$1.4 million from the Congressional Spending Fund through Jeanne Shaheen's office. Shawn said that Mr. Larson, our Public Works Director, worked hard to find matches for this grant, and this is one of those matches. The money we borrow will be forgiven so we won't need to pay it back. Frank Mai asked if we have had problems with the state on the Union Street project? Shawn said that there has been issues with the state over who owns the drainage. We have been approved for grants in the past, but were not able to move forward on those because of the drainage. The Town and State are working together to be able to complete this project. We are trying to move forward to work together on this. Moderator Waystack said in order for this article to pass we need a 3/5 majority. The polls were open for voting on Article 20. Moderator Waystack continued with the meeting, and will announce the results once we have counted the ballots.

Moderator Waystack said he received a request to move Article 30 up to be discussed after Article 21. The voters approved moving Article 30 up after Article 21.

Article 21 Readopt Optional Veterans Tax Credit

Shall the town readopt the OPTIONAL VETERANS TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28, II, for an annual tax credit on residential property of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500)? (Majority Vote Required)

A motion was made by John Tholl to move the question. The motion was seconded by Abbey Querrard. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of readopting the OPTIONAL VETERANS TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28, II, for an annual tax credit on residential property of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500).**

Moderator Waystack said we will now move to Article 30 – Adopt the All Veterans Tax Credit

Article 30 Adopt the All Veterans Tax Credit

Shall the Town ADOPT the ALL-VETERANS TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28-b, for an annual tax credit on residential property which shall be equal to the same amount as the standard or optional veterans tax credit voted by the town under RSA 72:28? (By Petition)(Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. John Tholl said everybody knows he is a Vietnam Veteran and he receives the tax credit. He said that he is not speaking in favor or opposed. He is speaking as he is concerned that we don't know how many veterans there are in the Whitefield community that are eligible to get this tax credit. If you serve more than 90 days, you are eligible for this tax credit. If this passes, it could significantly increase the tax burden for the taxpayers. John said that there are very few members in the American Legion who go and attend the meetings. Shawn said the Board did not take it too great with the water and sewer bills increasing from things that were decided back in 2017 and 2018 town meetings and everyone wants to lynch the board. This credit is for anyone who has been in there for 90 days and it is \$500 off the tax, which will be made up by the other taxpayers. If you vote for this, and if there are a lot of people who qualify for it, your taxes will go up. Lewis Gooden said he has lived here for 62 years, and Maggie Hassen passed this bill so veterans who did not serve during war times could get the credit. Mr. Gooden said he is a cold war veteran and does not qualify for the credit. He said there are not too many of these veterans left. Tammy Dubreuil said that she put this petition warrant article together because she feels that any veteran deserves a tax credit whether they served during a war time or not. They deserve it as well as veterans who served during war time. A veteran is a veteran. It is a choice they make to sign up. Tammy said the credit is \$500. The Board has said they don't know how many are out there, but four people have been denied in the past year. That is \$2000 divided up among the taxpayers, which is less than one penny per person. Eric Dubreuil is the commander of the VFW post here, and he said that they have a total of six active members, and three of those are residents of Whitefield. That is the numbers as far as he knows. Bruce Brekke said could we clarify what veterans mean? If you are a member of the VFW, you have to serve during a war period. Sondra Brekke said she doesn't have any problem with any veteran if they served in any war or not, but she does have an issue with only having to serve for 90 days. Mr. Gooden said that there are not too many left who even qualify. Stephanie Hughes-Cross said that she thanks any veteran who served. She is a proud wife and a mother of veterans who served. Veteran is a definition that defines itself. She understands how the board feels. Less than 1% serve their country and there should be a way to serve those people. Tom Banit said he served in Vietnam in 1969. He knows veterans who served in wars, and people who didn't serve in war or combat and say they never served. They served and gave up their time. It is dangerous work whether you served in a war or not. They give up two to three years of their life. He hears what the Board is saying about the 90 days. People in the National Guard can get called off for duty, and he tends to favor to recognize all the veterans who give up your time freely, danger is involved and you are away from your family. Teresa Russo said under the All-Veterans Credit, she would qualify and she wouldn't apply for it. She is married to someone who served for 20 years. There is a big difference between someone who is mobile and someone who served 20 years. Frank Mai asked what do veterans who are not getting this discount get now? They don't get anything. Frank said when he first came here it was \$50. A veteran who is not in a war zone does not get anything. Peter Russo said the All-Veterans Tax Credit should have a higher minimum service requirement to protect the taxpayers. Ninety days could be someone who finished basic training, and that is a low bar. David Clifford would like to thank all veterans who have served. He thought this one short paragraph for the article is vague and doesn't explain the potential impact to the town. John Tholl pointed out that if two veterans live in the household, they both get the credit, and that is something else we need to think about it. **A show of voting cards was too close to call. A hand count was conducted, and the article failed:**

No: 31 Yes: 20

Moderator Waystack announced the results of the secret ballot vote on Article 20 Union Street Upgrade Project Engineering & Design. The article passed:

**Yes: 62 No: 6
(The article needed 41 votes for the 3/5 majority)**

Article 22 Tri-County Community Action Program, Inc. Service Programs

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Thousand Two Hundred and Twenty-Five Dollars (\$6,225) for the operation of Tri County Community Action Program, Inc. service programs in Whitefield: Transportation, Energy Assistance, Weatherization, Guardianship, Head Start, Homeless Intervention, RSVP, ServiceLink, Senior Meals, Tamworth Dental Center. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion on the article. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$6,225.**

Article 23 North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirteen Dollars (\$14,913) in support of North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency to be used to assist in the delivery of home health, hospice, palliative and long-term care services to the residents of the Town of Whitefield. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. Roxie Severance said she is on the Board and in the last year there were 1,220 home health visits and 297 visits from hospice care. Roxie said they are passionate about the care they provide and thanked the town for their support in the past. John Tholl said he totally supports this article. His father-in-law passed away last night and North Country Home Health & Hospice was there and they appreciate all their support. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$14,913.**

Article 24 Pathways Pregnancy Care Center

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$250) to support Pathways Pregnancy Care Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, Education Program in 2023. Through this program, Pathways offers over 200 different classes about pregnancy, prenatal development, birth, parenting, life skills, healthy relationships, fatherhood, life renewal, and much more. Most classes are or can be sent via text or emailed to clients for them to complete at home. Our subscription to Bright Course costs \$1,469 per year. Education is just one of the many services that we offer at Pathways. All services, including classes, are absolutely free of charge to our clients and strictly confidential. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. Stephanie Gallagher said she looked this organization up on their web site and found that they are a highly religious organization. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$250.**

Article 25 Second Chance Animal Rescue

To see if the Town of Whitefield, NH will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) for the Second Chance Animal Rescue. Second Chance Animal Rescue is a nonprofit that provides care and shelter for abused and abandoned cats and kittens. Second Chance Animal Rescue also sponsors monthly low cost Spay/Neuter clinics for both dogs and cats, as well as shot clinics in the Spring. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. Amanda Proctor spoke on behalf of Second Chance Animal Rescue and reported on the services they have performed. She said they have dedicated volunteers. Bruce Brekke said he understands the intent of the article, but he questions the generosity of this program. The previous article was \$250 for pregnancy education, we discussed our veterans, and Whitefield is sensitive to where our tax money goes. Bruce was going to recommend lowering the amount of this article, but he thinks the article should be voted down. David Clifford is not for or opposed to this article. He is questioning the amount. David Clifford made a motion to amend the amount of the article from \$1,000 to \$500. The motion was seconded from the floor. The floor was open for discussion on the amendment. **The amendment to reduce the amount of this article from \$1,000 to \$500 failed by a show of voting cards.** The floor was open for discussion on the original amount for \$1,000. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$1,000.**

Article 26 St. Paul's Episcopal Church Weekend Food Backpack

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Two-Hundred Sixty-Nine Dollars (\$1,269.00) in support of Saint Paul's Episcopal Church Backpack Program, which provides weekend meals and snacks to eligible children attending the Whitefield, NH Elementary School. That number represents 10% of the projected costs. The Whitefield School currently serves 48 children each week. This includes the foods and snacks as well as a voucher for a 1/2 gallon of milk. During the fourth quarter of 2022 the Backpack Program has seen a 20% increase in the number of children served, food costs have jumped 84.1% and the weekly food costs per child have increased 53.5%. Combine that with a major reduction in food availability from the New Hampshire Food Bank. The current projection for 2023 is 235 students weekly in the towns of Stratford, Groveton, Stark, Lancaster, and Whitefield.(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority vote required).

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$1,269.**

Article 27 Androscoggin Valley Home Care

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500) for the purpose of supporting clients of Androscoggin Valley Home Care who live in Whitefield. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$3,500.**

Article 28 Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$4,500) for Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc. (ACHS). ACHS is a non-profit community health center that provides primary preventive health care to anyone, regardless of their ability to pay. This will help ACHS continue to provide high quality care to 426 current WHITEFIELD patients, as well as reach more of those in need. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. Courtney Vashaw said she has worked with ACHS with initiatives, and they are an important and active community partner and resource. They have given the library over 1,000 free covid tests to give out to residents. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of \$4,500.**

Article 29 White Mountain Mental Health

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Nine Hundred and Nineteen Dollars (\$2,919) for White Mountain Mental Health, recognizing that untreated mental illness results in loss of productivity at work, disruption to families and children, risk to the community and loss of life through suicide. Treatment works, but only if it is available and affordable. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen) (By Petition) (Majority Vote Required)

The article was moved and seconded from the floor. The floor was opened for discussion. **A show of voting cards was in favor of the article in the amount of 2,919.**

Moderator Waystack said that Sara Doucette, who is a resident of Whitefield, had asked if it was possible for her to give a three-minute update on the status of the landfill. Moderator Waystack said he would leave it up to the voters. A show of voting cards was in favor of Sara giving an update on the status of the landfill.

Sara thanked the voters for letting her speak. She said in 2020 Whitefield citizens overwhelmingly voted to oppose Casella's proposed landfill in Dalton. She is not speaking against Casella's drivers or workers, but is speaking to the larger issue of the diminished health and quality of life that this project will certainly bring especially to Whitefield but also to Carroll, Bethlehem, and Littleton as well. Not much has changed since 2020. The threats to our drinking and recreational waters are more acute now than ever. US EPA has told us we can expect environmental hazards from the proposed site, which is a 180-acre site that is a gravel pit with fractured bedrock underneath it. The truck traffic is a threat for Whitefield's Route 3 and Route 116 intersection. Air pollution from a landfill is noxious and harmful to people for up to a six-mile radius from facilities just like this one. It will impact our property values, tax base, and the north country's reputation as a premier vacation and recreation destination. Casella could eventually have the biggest landfill in the northeast. The landfill is of no benefit to New Hampshire whatsoever. Sara asks everyone to keep informed on the project and to work to protect what we know to be of irreplaceable value in our environment, our town, and our region. She will be leaving cards with information and a link to the NCABC at the town office.

Shawn White said on behalf of the Board we would like to say thanks to the election workers, the Department Heads, employees, all the Town boards and committees. He also said thank you to the library for working together with the Board to try to keep moving forward, to keep our infrastructure, and to be able to maintain a fiscally responsible budget at the same time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

I hereby certify that the above return of the Annual Town Meeting of March 14, 2023 is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.



Tina Wright, Town Clerk

Town of Whitefield, New Hampshire