

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
TOWN OF RUMNEY
Minutes for the
2009 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

History

Based on the tone of the phone calls that I received in the weeks leading up to town meeting, the consensus is that we have a relatively severe recession underway. Some are comparing our current recession to a depression. Given the extreme conditions that we all know existed during the Great Depression of the 30's, I thought it might be interesting to do a reality check to see what was going on in Rumney at the time.

Town inventory numbers were typically shown in some detail in the town reports of the time. For example, total valued inventory was estimated at \$700,330 in 1927. By 1934 the figure had dropped to \$681,790. Property was dropping in value, but not as much as I had imagined given the severity of the downturn across the nation. I decided to take a closer look at the years 1932 and 1933 to see how these trends were developing.

Like today, the majority of the valuation of town property was identified as real estate. In 1932, total Rumney real estate was valued at \$557,575 out of a total valuation in town of \$699,130. Property was actually slightly higher in 1933 at \$560,615, whereas the total valuation of all property of interest dropped to \$691,768. What was fascinating was the valuation of the remainder of the property. Perhaps this provides some insight into what was going on in the local economy.

In 1932, Rumney's inventory included 104 horses valued at \$6,410. This equates to \$61.63 per horse. However, the town's horse appraisal dropped significantly in 1933. Rumney only had 88 horses with a total value of \$5,170. This equates to only \$58.75 per horse. We had 2 Oxen in town valued at \$140 in 1932. They were both gone by the next year, but we added 4 hogs valued at only \$40. In 1932 Rumney had 318 cows valued at \$17,290, equating to \$54.37 per cow. We actually had more cows the following year (326) but they were appraised at a lower total value of \$16,020, which equates to only \$49.14 per cow. Clearly cows were taking a hit, as were fowls. We had 5150 fowls valued at a dollar apiece in 1932. In 1933 we had more of them (6,347), but they were only appraised at about \$.85 apiece. We also had 17 sheep in 1932 valued at \$115. In 1933 we had more sheep (23), but the value was falling. The unit appraisal had plunged from \$6.76 per sheep in 1932, down to only 4 bucks apiece in 1933 for a total valuation of only \$92. The fur bearing animal market was also collapsing. In 1932 we had 125 such animals for a total valuation of \$4,290, but in 1933 we only had 107 valued at a mere \$2,415. Gasoline pumps and tanks also plunged, going from \$4,700 in 1932 to \$2,800 in 1933. Electric plants and lines were also included in inventory. These values were down slightly as well, falling from \$55,200 in 1932 to \$54,550 in 1933. Wood and lumber fell from \$15,315 to \$11,320.

Can we draw parallels to today's collapsed stock market and declining home values? Perhaps, but what made the Great Depression so catastrophic was its duration. Our current downturn has been with us for less than a year. Let's hope things improve soon.

To the inhabitants of the Town of Rumney in the County of Grafton and State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in town affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Russell Elementary School Gymnasium on School Street in said Rumney on Tuesday, the 10th day of March 2009, next, at 8:00 o'clock in the morning at which time the polls shall be opened for balloting on Article 1 and shall close not earlier than 7:00 o'clock in the evening, and you are hereby notified to meet at the Russell Elementary School Gymnasium in said Rumney on Thursday, the 12th day of March 2009, next, at 7:00 o'clock in the evening for the second session of the Town Meeting at which time action will be taken upon the remaining articles in this warrant.

The meeting opened at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance. There were 107 people present. Recognition and clocks were given to the following people for their years of service:

Ann Kent - Retiring from over 32 years of dedicated service to Rumney

Supervisor of the Checklist 1976 - 2008 32 years

Planning Board Clerk 1978 - 1985 7 years

Auditor 1987 - 1991 4 years

Polly Bartlett- Recognizing 25 years of dedicated service to Rumney

Treasurer 1984 to present

ARTICLE 1: The following people were elected as town officers for the ensuing year (by official ballot on March 10th):

ACTION:

March 10th Election day brought out 256 voters. The results were as follows:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Selectman | 3 Year Term | Janice Mulherin | 200 |
| Treasurer | 1 Year Term | Polly Bartlett | 217 |
| Library Trustee | 3 Year Term | Tom Wallace | 221 |
| Trustee Trust Funds | 3 Year Term | Betty Jo Taffe | 216 |
| Cemetery Trustee | 3 Year Term | | |
| Fire Commissioner | 3 Year Term | David Coursey | 217 |
| 2 Planning Board Members | 3 Year Terms | Brian Flynn | 187 |
| | | Carl Spring | 169 |
| Checklist Supervisor | 3 Year Term | Gail Sanborn | 230 |

ARTICLE 2: To choose three members for the **Budgetary Finance Advisory Board**; one for a 3-year term to represent the Lake area, one for a 3-year term to represent West Rumney and one for a 1-year term (to complete the 2nd year of a 2-year term) to represent the Quincy area.

ACTION: The following

3 Year Lake - No nominees for this area

3 Year West Rumney - Calvin Perkins nominated and voted for West Rumney

1 Year Quincy Area - Gerard Thibodeau nominated and voted for Quincy Area

ARTICLE 33:

Motion was made to move article 33 to the beginning of the meeting. **Vote by secret ballot**
Yes 59 No 40 to move the article up.

ACTION: ARTICLE 33: To direct the Selectmen of the Town of Rumney to cap any increase of their Annual Budget to any projected increase in revenue above the last Annual Budget and in no case to increase the Annual Budget more than the rate of inflation, as defined by the “National Consumer Price Index-(Urban/Rural)” (CPI-U/R) as averaged over the twelve months preceding the vote on the new Annual Budget. (This article submitted by petition.)

A chart was passed out as people entered the meeting. Discussion followed and it was explained that the article was advisory only.

It can't be legally binding on this or next year's budget. Selectman Andrew explained that there are two parts to the financial picture and this chart only shows one. Expenses and revenues combine to make the tax rate. We never know until later in the year what the revenues are going to be, so this is only half the picture. If we lower expenses now and the revenues are also lower, then the rate would still go up. Based on the town portion of the rate in 2008 an average bill of \$2,000.00 would cost the tax payer \$440.00. This would be the entire cost of your town services for a whole year.

The article failed. Vote by secret ballot was No 63 and Yes 42

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$377,629** to defray **General Government Expenses** for the ensuing year; \$362,707 to be raised by taxes; \$9,650 to come from collected fees and \$5,272 from employees' share of health insurance.

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Executive | \$ 53,695 |
| Town Clerk/Tax Collector | \$ 42,866 |
| Supervisors of the Checklist | \$ 1,190 |
| Financial Administration | \$ 27,895 |
| Legal Expense | \$ 11,000 |
| Personnel Administration/Benefits | \$ 162,976 |
| Planning Board | \$ 2,702 |
| General Government Buildings | \$ 33,825 |
| Street Lights | \$ 7,800 |
| Insurance/Other | \$ 32,000 |
| Regional Association Dues | \$ 1,680 |
| TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT | \$ 377,629 |

ACTION: The selectman proposed an amendment to the article.

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 3:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$390,629 to defray General Government Expenses for the ensuing year; \$375,707 to be raised by taxes; \$9,650 to come from collected fees and \$5,272 from employees' share of health insurance.

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Executive | \$ 53,695 |
| Town Clerk/Tax Collector | \$ 42,866 |
| Supervisors of the Checklist | \$ 1,190 |
| Financial Administration | \$ 40,895 |
| Legal Expense | \$ 11,000 |
| Personnel Administration/Benefits | \$ 162,976 |
| Planning Board | \$ 2,702 |
| General Government Buildings | \$ 33,825 |
| Street Lights | \$ 7,800 |
| Insurance/Other | \$ 32,000 |
| Regional Association Dues | \$ 1,680 |
| TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT | \$ 390,629 |

Justification – Due to technical issues that have come up recently with the present networking system and hardware, it is necessary to install a proper server earlier than planned to handle the increased work load of the new assessing program and the number of computers on the network. We have an estimate for \$10,000 for hardware and labor, \$2,000 for unanticipated extras that may be needed, i.e. internet connection, drop, etc. \$1,000 was originally budgeted for tech support but the total billed to date is close to \$2,000). This came up at the last minute so this is the only quote available in time for the meeting. The board will be getting more quotes before making a decision.

**The motion to amend the article passed by voice vote.
The article as amended passed by voice vote. All YES.**

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$49,600** for **assessing services** and updating the tax maps for the ensuing year.

ACTION: The article was voted in the affirmative with no nays.

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,000** for the purpose of printing and distributing the updated **Master Plan**. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, V. *(The Selectmen recommend this article.)*

ACTION: An amendment was proposed to reduce the amount to \$500.00. It was put to voice vote and failed. Article as written was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,000** for **Code Enforcement** for the ensuing year.

**ACTION: Article was amended to read:
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for Code Enforcement for the ensuing year.
The vote was affirmative to amend the article.
Amended article passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000** for the operation of the **Cemeteries** for the ensuing year; \$20,000 to be raised by taxes and \$10,000 to come from Cemetery Trust Funds.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$174,288** to defray the cost of running the **Police Department** for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Motion was made to cut the budget by 20%. Motion failed by secret ballot YES 32 NO 63. The article as written passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$23,009** for **Ambulance Service** contracted with the Town of Plymouth for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$7,025** to defray the cost of the **Safety Committee, E-911 and Emergency Management** services for the ensuing year.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Safety Committee | \$ 1,500 |
| E-911..... | \$ 300 |
| Emergency Management..... | \$ 5,225 |
| (includes Forest Fires) | |
| TOTAL SAFETY, E-911 & EMG MGT | \$ 7,025 |

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$53,540** to defray the cost of running the **Fire Department** for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,985** to defray the cost of running the **EMS (Emergency Medical Services)** for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$199,488** for the maintenance of **Highways and Bridges** for the ensuing year.

ACTION: Article 13 passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$75,000** for **Road Improvements** for the ensuing year. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, V. *(The Selectmen recommend this article.*

Action: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$125,055** to defray the cost of maintaining the **Transfer Station** for the ensuing year.

**ACTION: It was noted that the transfer station made \$28,146.70 in recycling fees.
The article passed by voice vote.**

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,636** to defray the Town's share of the costs of the **Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District** (\$1,536) and **Plymouth Water and Sewer District Permit Fee** (\$100).

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1** to defray any estimated cost of services, necessary labor and/or equipment needed at the Transfer Station for part of Phase II of the **Landfill Closure** process as **may** be required by the State of New Hampshire.

ACTION: After some discussion, the following amendment was withdrawn by the Selectmen. There was discussion about the use of the word “landfill” as opposed to “burning dump”. The original article was amended by a handcount YES 37 NO 35 to change the article to:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1** to defray any estimated cost of services, necessary labor and/or equipment needed at the Transfer Station. The amended article passed by voice vote.

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 17: Withdrawn by Selectmen.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,500** to defray any estimated cost of services, labor and/or equipment that may be needed at the Transfer Station for part of Phase II of the **Landfill Closure** process as **may** be required by the State of New Hampshire.

ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$34,611** for the purposes of **Animal Control, Health and Welfare**.

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Animal Services | \$ 1,000 |
| Animal Control Officer | \$ 1,500 |
| Health Officer | \$ 1,200 |
| Health Administration | \$ 500 |
| Mount Mooselauke Health Center | \$ 1,250 |
| Pemi-Baker Home Health & Hospice | \$ 7,011 |
| Plymouth Regional Clinic | \$ 1,000 |
| Voices Against Violence | \$ 1,000 |
| Bridge House..... | \$ 250 |
| Genesis | \$ 500 |
| Casa | \$ 250 |
| Cady | \$ 400 |
| Mid-State | \$ 1,250 |
| Direct Welfare Assistance | \$12,000 |
| Grafton County Senior Citizens | \$ 3,000 |
| Tri-County Community Action Program (CAP) | <u>\$ 2,500</u> |
| TOTAL ANIMAL CONTROL, HEALTH & WELFARE | \$ 34,611 |

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote. There was discussion about cutting some of the items from this article.

ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,802** for the purposes of **Culture, Recreation and Conservation** for the ensuing year; \$ 9,554 to be raised by taxes and \$1,248 to come from unreserved fund balance.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Common Mowing/Maintenance | \$ 1,800 |
| Baker Athletic Field Mowing/Maintenance | \$ 2,652 |
| Old Home Day | \$ 3,000 |
| Patriotic Purposes | \$ 350 |
| Conservation Trust Account | \$ 2,000 |
| Conservation Commission Administration | \$ 800 |
| Baker River Watershed | <u>\$ 200</u> |
| TOTAL CULTURE, RECREATION & CONSERVATION | \$10,802 |

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$39,950** to operate the Byron G. Merrill Library for the ensuing year; \$34,950 to be raised by taxes and \$5,000 to come from Library Endowment Funds.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$3,500** to defray the cost of interest expenses on loans in anticipation of taxes and other temporary loans.

ACTION: Article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$ 92,000** to be added to the previously established **Capital Reserve Funds** as follows:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| To the Highway Equipment Fund (1960) | \$ 22,000 |
| To the Fire Department Fund (1963) | \$ 15,000 |
| To the Town Revaluation Fund (1984) | \$ 10,000 |
| To the Police Cruiser Fund (1986) | \$ 7,500 |
| To the Town Facilities Fund (1987) | \$ 20,000 |
| To the EMS Vehicle Fund (2005) | \$ 5,000 |
| To the Transfer Station Equipment Fund (2008) | \$ 4,000 |
| To the Bridge Repair/Maintenance Fund (2008) | <u>\$ 8,500</u> |

TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS **\$ 92,000**

(The Selectmen recommend this article.)

ACTION: Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,800** for the purpose of installing **Guard Rails**. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, V. *(The Selectmen recommend this article.)*

ACTION: Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 24: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,000** for improvements to the **Darling property** such as portable toilet rental, signs and mowing; \$750 to be raised by taxes and \$250 to come from the Rumney Conservation Commission Fund for the mowing.

ACTION: Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 25: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$4,500** for the purpose of replacing the roof at the **West Rumney Fire Station**.

ACTION: An amendment was made and passed by voice vote.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,500 to come from the Town Facilities Fund for the purpose of replacing the roof at the West Rumney Fire Station. Article as amended passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$3,745** for the purpose of purchasing **extrication clothing for Rumney EMS**, \$3,558 to come from a federal grant and \$187 to come from unreserved fund balance.

In the event the grant is not received, to see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 for the purpose of purchasing extrication clothing for Rumney EMS, \$2,000 to come from unreserved fund balance. This article is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, IV. (*The Selectmen recommend this article*)

ACTION: The grant was not received. The amendment to article 26 was placed on the floor.
AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 26:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 for the purpose of purchasing extrication clothing for Rumney EMS; \$2,000 to come from unreserved fund balance. This article is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, IV. (*The Selectmen recommend this article*)

ACTION: The amended article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 27: To see if the Town will vote to establish a **Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund** for the purpose of purchasing necessary equipment, other than vehicles, to maintain compliance with current regulations and further appoint the Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$4,000** to be placed in said fund. (Majority vote required.) (*The Selectmen recommend this article.*)

ACTION: The article passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 28: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000** for the purpose of funding a portion of the **Summer Enrichment Program** for children through Rumney Recreation and the Russell School A+ program; \$3,500 to be raised by taxes, \$1,500 will come from unreserved fund balance and \$5,000 from tuition fees.

ACTION: The article was passed by secret ballot. YES 53 NO 23.

ARTICLE 29: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000** for the purpose of purchasing an **EMS Ambulance**; \$20,000 to be raised by taxes, \$10,000 to come from the EMS Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund (2005).

ACTION: The article was amended to insert “fire and” before EMS Ambulance; and passed by voice vote.

The amended article passed by secret ballot YES 60 NO 14.

ARTICLE 30: Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Rumney, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$20,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$25,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$30,000? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive 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 \$20,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$25,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$40,000 excluding the value of the person’s residence. This article shall take effect for the 2009 property tax year. (Majority vote required)

ACTION: An amendment was made and passed by voice vote to change the net income amounts from 20,000 to 25,000 and 25,000 to 30,000.

Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Rumney, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$20,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$25,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$30,000? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive 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 \$25,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$30,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$40,000 excluding the value of the person's residence. This article shall take effect for the 2009 property tax year. (Majority vote required)

The amended article passed by voice vote of majority yes and 1 no.

ARTICLE 31: Shall the town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b) to authorize the Conservation Commission to expend funds for contributions to 'qualified organizations' for the purchase of property interests, or facilitating transactions related thereto, where the property interest is to be held by the qualified organization and the town will retain no interest in the property?

ACTION: This would be for Rumney land owners only. Passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 32: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 79-F under which owners of certain structures used for farm purposes may apply for tax appraisal at no more than replacement cost less depreciation, with the land under the structure appraised at no more than 10% of market value.

ACTION: Passed by majority vote with 2 no's.

ARTICLE 33: To direct the Selectmen of the Town of Rumney to cap any increase of their Annual Budget to any projected increase in revenue above the last Annual Budget and in no case to increase the Annual Budget more than the rate of inflation, as defined by the "National Consumer Price Index-(Urban/Rural)" (CPI-U/R) as averaged over the twelve months preceding the vote on the new Annual Budget. (This article submitted by petition.)

ACTION: See beginning of meeting notes. Article was moved up by vote of the town.

ARTICLE 34: To hear reports of agents, auditors, and committees heretofore chosen, to pass any vote relating thereto, and to transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

ACTION: There being no additional business the meeting Adjourned at 11:36 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Whitcomb
Town Clerk