

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
December 1, 2003 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: Brian C. Warburton, Chairman, Virginia Bridle,
William Sullivan, Cliff Pratt, James Workman
James Barrington, Town Manager
Karen Anderson, Administrative Assistant

I. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Liz Premo led the audience in the salute to the flag.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Activities

The annual Christmas Parade will take place on Saturday, December 6th at 1:30 and the Christmas Tree Lighting is at 7:00 PM on Friday, December 5th at Marelli Square. The theme of the parade this year is "Cartoons and Characters" and many town officials will be taking part in costume. Mr. Tom Higgins had been selected as Grand Marshall of the parade and he has delegated that honor to Norm and Marge Grandmaison in recognition of their 50 years as owners of the Ashworth Hotel. The Board thanked Ann Carnaby for her assistance. The Hampton Fire Department is still accepting toys and applications for the Toy Bank.

Winter Parking Ban

The winter parking ban is on and warnings have been issued for vehicles that are parked overnight on town roads. Tickets will now be issued to violators of the parking ban.

Happy Birthday

Police Chief William Wrenn was wished a Happy Birthday.

Budget Committee

The Budget Committee will be reviewing the Fire Department budget on Tuesday, December 2nd and Police Budget on Thursday evening, December 4th.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Town Manager's Report

Seaside Realty Trust v. Hampton

Mr. Barrington reported that Seaside Realty Trust has been denied a rehearing at the Supreme Court and that case is now closed. Work has been done to remove the portions of the brick wall and fence that had encroached into the right-of-way of Dumas Avenue.

Property Taxes

Mr. Warburton told the Board that the Tax Collector reported that she has collected nearly \$14 million of the \$19 million in property taxes as of the end of last week. Mrs. Bridle said that does not appear to be as large a percentage as in past years.

Proposed Revenue Increases

Mrs. Bridle asked when people would be able to pick up copies of the proposed fee increases. Mr. Barrington said that he will have them available for the public this week.

District Court Building

Mr. Workman asked the Town Manager if there has been any movement with the District Court. Mr. Barrington said that the last he heard was that a committee of communities involved was to be formed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Review and Consider Warrant Articles for 2004 Warrant

Mr. Warburton noted that each of the Selectmen have a copy of proposed articles for discussion by the Board. The articles have been assigned temporary letters for identification until the final warrant is put together.

ARTICLE A

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Million (\$3,000,000) Dollars for the acquisition of conservation easements and/or open space land to be permanently protected (including any buildings or structures incidental to such land) in the best interests of the Town, as the Selectmen deem appropriate, as to property identified on Tax Map 137. Lot 2 and 2A (a/k/a The Hurd Farm) consisting of approximately 160 acres and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$3,000,000 bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rates of interest thereon, and to further authorize the Selectmen to act on behalf of the Town in connection with such acquisitions of conservation easements or other open space land, and to authorize the Selectmen to apply for and accept any funds from the State of New Hampshire, the Federal Government, and private sources, as they may become available. No bonds or notes shall be issued with a term maturity of less than fifteen years, and the authority conferred by the passage of this Article is non-lapsing until its purpose is accomplished, in accordance with RSA 32:7, III.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the importance of putting this article forward and noted that the number of acres involved should be inserted into the article.

Mr. Pratt MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen put forth the article to purchase the easement rights to the Hurd Farm.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE C

“Shall we modify the elderly exemptions for property tax in the Town of Hampton, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$82,000; for a person 75 years up to 80 years, \$115,000; for a person 80 years of age or older \$147,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person’s spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$26,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$43,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$95,000 excluding the value of the person’s residence.”

Mr. Warburton explained that all of the elderly residents should understand that there are a lot of qualifications in the article, based on statutory requirements. Mr. Workman said that in light of the increased assessments it is appropriate to adjust these amounts from time to time.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to put the article to adjust the elderly exemptions forward.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE D

“Shall we modify the exemption for the disabled under the provisions of RSA 72:37-c from the assessed value of residential real estate for property tax purposes to the value of \$41,000 to address significant increases in property values? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years and own and occupy the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned

by a spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$21,000 or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$30,000; and own assets not in excess of \$50,000 excluding the value of the person's residence."

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to put the article to adjust the disabled exemptions forward.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE E

"Shall we modify the exemption for the blind under the provisions of RSA 72:37 from the assessed value of residential real estate for property tax purposes to the value of \$25,000 to address significant increases in property values? This statute provides that every inhabitant who is legally blind shall be exempt each year, for property tax purposes, from the assessed value on a residence in the amount determined by the Town."

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to put the article to adjust the blind exemptions forward.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE F

Purchasing land for Exeter Road Railroad Bridge replacement.

Mr. Warburton asked if the available funds will dry up if the Board does not put forward an article to purchase land this year. Mr. Barrington said that they will not; the State's funding for the construction work aspect of the bridge is slated for 2005, although it can be delayed for an additional year. The decision to put the land acquisition article forward in 2004 was made so that the Town would be ready to proceed in 2005 with construction and the fact that the town has willing sellers in 2004, but may not in 2005. Without willing sellers, the acquisitions would then require an eminent domain process. Mr. Barrington explained that the owner of the Sanel building will be losing the revenue from his tenants in June, 2004 and the Waldron Trust will be unable to sign an extended billboard lease in 2004 and will lose revenue. The costs of the acquisitions are not available at this time, although Mr. Barrington expects to have that information within the next couple of weeks. It is important to know what portion of the acquisitions costs the State will deem eligible for 90% funding.

Mr. Warburton said that the Board of Selectmen had asked for approximate figures, and if this were to be put forth as a warrant article based on estimates, the actual cost could end up significantly higher. Mr. Barrington asked that the Board hold off on a decision on this article until the figures are available. Mrs. Bridle said that she was not in favor of putting the article forward this year. Mr. Sullivan said that there is the option of purchasing the property with the Trust Funds. Mr. Workman said that it is a valuable consideration at some point in time, but there is not enough information at this time. Mr. Pratt said that he did a bridge study several years ago and knows that the bridge has been deemed unsafe. Mr. Pratt said not fixing the bridge is not an alternative, and in order for it to be fixed it is going to cost some money. Mr. Sullivan said that this is an important project and when it is done, he wants to use that opportunity to realign the High Street intersection. Mr. Sullivan said that the Board needs to keep this situation in focus and consider the use of the trust funds.

Mr. Barrington said that with minimal participation from the State, the outside exposure to the Town for land acquisitions is \$1 million; the likely exposure to the town is \$500,000-\$600,000. The preliminary information the Town Manager is hearing from the Department of Transportation is that they are not interested in participating in the purchase of land outside the realignment area. That stance has been discussed with them because the willing sellers are interested in selling only full parcels, not portions. The cost of eminent domain procedures to purchase only a portion of the parcels could be as much as the cost of the entire parcel. If the entire parcel is purchased it would provide additional parking spaces that could be utilized by the downtown merchants. Mr. Warburton said that the whole package encompasses land

acquisition, lining up the intersection and replacing the bridge. Mr. Warburton said that he is not sure if the Board is willing to move forward on any of this at this time. Mr. Sullivan said that utilizing the trust funds for this is something to consider, with the understanding that the money is returned to the trust fund with interest. Mr. Warburton asked if additional information can be had for next week. Mr. Barrington said that he will try, but some of the answers are beyond his control.

Mr. Workman said that regardless of where the money comes from, the Board needs an article to authorize the purchase. Mr. Barrington said that was correct, and the article would raise the total amount from a combination of town, state and federal funds and would appropriate the total amount to authorize the purchase. Mr. Warburton said that there is no question that the bridge needs to be fixed, but there is not enough information to put this forward. Mr. Warburton asked the Board if they wanted Mr. Barrington to pursue more information for this year. Mrs. Bridle asked when the information would be available, as the deadline for the budget committee is early in January. Mr. Barrington suggested that the Board of Selectmen meet in a non-public session to discuss the acquisition of real estate because there are some negotiations that he would like to discuss with the Board. He added that he understands if the Board decides to put this off for a year. The Board requested additional information for the meeting of December 15th.

ARTICLE G

Shall the Town establish a Tax Increment Finance District?

Mr. Barrington explained that the premise behind a Tax Increment Finance District is that when improvements are made that increase the value of the property in a particular area, the increased property tax revenue goes back to defray the costs of those improvements. Mr. Pratt said that he does not have enough information on this. Mrs. Bridle said that she is not in favor of this. The remainder of the Board agreed that this article should not go forward.

ARTICLE H

Shall the Town establish Impact Fees?

Mr. Workman said that this is something that needs to be put forward by the Planning Board. Mr. Pratt said that the Board of Selectmen should recommend that the Planning Board put something to this effect forward.

ARTICLE I

New Revenue ideas?

The Board agreed to discuss the proposals next week and determine what fees to put forward.

ARTICLE J

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$275,000.00 to construct a vehicle wash down facility to satisfy requirements of the US Environmental Protection Agency? Such appropriation shall include all design, architectural, engineering, demolition, removal, construction, landscaping, and any other work necessary or desirable to complete the project.

ARTICLE K

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000.00 to construct a salt storage facility to satisfy requirements of the US Environmental Protection Agency? Such appropriation shall include all design, architectural, engineering, demolition, removal, construction, landscaping, and any other work necessary or desirable to complete the project.

Mr. Hangen was present to discuss the public works articles. Mr. Warburton said that when articles for these two items were presented last year, the Board was told that the Town would be fined by EPA if they did not have a wash down facility and a salt storage building. Mr. Warburton asked if the town has been fined. Mr. Hangen said that the Town will not break the law, and have complied with the EPA regulations. Mr. Hangen explained that he will risk not having enough salt for the roads because they do not have an area to store the salt under cover. Mr. Hangen said that they are able to store enough salt for one storm. Mr. Sullivan asked about the new State shed and if that is sized to house a full winter of salt. Mr. Hangen said that the State could likely store salt for one-half the season and he is looking at doing the same type of wooden structure. Mr. Workman said that if the Town can get by another year without harming ourselves it should try to do that. Mr. Pratt said that if we have a winter like last year we are in trouble. Mr. Hangen said that even if the Board supports this, it will have to be approved in March and the building would not be available for this winter.

Mrs. Bridle asked Mr. Hangen which of his three articles would be his priority. Mr. Hangen said that the wash down facility is the most important. Mr. Sullivan said that he would be in favor of just one article, and if Mr. Hangen feels that the wash down facility is the most important he would support that. Mr. Hangen clarified that the wash down facility is a multi-purpose building that in addition to a washing area, will provide storage and office space for the sewer and drain department. Mr. Warburton said that there are a lot projects that are still waiting for completion and he is concerned that we are not completing what is already approved in a reasonable amount of time before getting involved in other things. Mr. Hangen said that the Town expects the roads to be black during snowstorms and if salt cannot be stored outside, that is not going to happen. Mr. Sullivan said that last year the cost was \$375,000 for these two items plus a truck barn and this year it is \$475,000 for just two items. Mr. Hangen said that the \$375,000 would not have been enough last year.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to put the article for \$275,000 for a vehicle wash down facility forward to the warrant.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE L

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$180,000.00 to purchase a replacement trash packer truck? Such appropriation shall include all advertising, design, construction, transportation, and any other work necessary or desirable to complete the project.

Mrs. Bridle said that she would not support that article this year and asked if the Town does not get a new packer will there be any decrease in trash collection. Mr. Hangen said that there would not. Mr. Sullivan asked what vehicle would be replaced. Mr. Hangen said that he is not sure, but it would be the oldest one. He added that packers have a normal, ten-year useful life and one has gone beyond that. Mr. Warburton said that if vehicles need to be replaced, they should be put in the budget or CRF's established to prepare for the purchase. Mr. Workman said that if the town has a packer that has gone beyond its expectancy and in order to preserve the service levels, he would recommend putting the article forward this year. The consensus of the Board was to put this article off for one year. Mr. Warburton said that the Budget Committee needs to be reminded that they do not put forward warrant articles.

ARTICLE M

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$125,000.00 to construct new tennis courts at Tuck Field at or near the site of the current tennis courts? Such appropriation shall include all design, architectural, engineering, demolition, removal, construction, landscaping, and any other work necessary or desirable to complete the project.

Mrs. Bridle said that if the Board had to eliminate a packer, the tennis courts should wait another year. The Board agreed. Mr. Sullivan told the Board that Mrs. Martin has stated that if the tennis courts are not rebuilt, they would have to be shut down. Mr. Barrington confirmed that they are deteriorating and Mrs.

Martin does not feel they are safe to play on. Mr. Barrington said that there are other tennis courts available in town for residents. The article was not put forward.

ARTICLE N

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate \$350,000 to be added to the Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund established by Article 16 of the 1998 Town Meeting pursuant to the provisions of RSA 35:1?

Mr. Warburton said that he was a proponent of establishing this fund but thinks that with the current balance of over \$800,000 the Board could skip a year on this. Mrs. Bridle said she agreed, but wanted to make sure that the Board did not get into the practice of not adding to the fund.

ARTICLE O

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to make repairs to the roof and structure of the Lane Memorial Library? Such appropriation shall include all design, architectural, engineering, demolition, removal, construction, landscaping, and any other work necessary or desirable to complete the project.

Mr. Warburton told the Board that at the CIP presentation, Catherine Redden and the Library Trustees spoke about future plans of the library. The CIP Committee recommended that they put forward this article for necessary roof repairs and other maintenance. Mr. Pratt said that he was in favor of this.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED to move this article to the warrant.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE P

Shall the Town of Hampton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 for all expenses necessary or desirable to study the space needs, site the location, perform traffic and geotechnical studies, and prepare conceptual design including floor plans and elevations for the Fire Department facilities needed at the Beach and at such other locations as may be desirable? Said plan shall also include recommendations concerning the siting and layout of the headquarters facilities as well as short and long term planning for substations.

Mr. Warburton said that this community needs a new fire station, and in order for a proposal to be ready for the 2005 warrant a space needs study and conceptual plans need to be funded. Mr. Workman said that this is similar to the article last year that did not pass. Mr. Barrington confirmed that and noted that it is for half the amount. Mr. Sullivan said that he is 100% in favor of preparing to build a new beach fire station at this time. Mrs. Bridle asked what backup is available to know that \$60,000 is enough for the study. Mr. Barrington said that the Town has just entered into a \$30,000 contract with Landry Architects for some of the preliminary space needs work, to identify potential sites at the beach and determine if it would be appropriate to make modifications to Station II to change that to Headquarters and create a substation at the beach. Mrs. Bridle asked where the \$30,000 came from. Mr. Barrington said that the Fire Chief did without some items in his budget in order to accomplish the goal of being ready to build a new fire station in 2005. This proposed article takes that work to the next step. Mr. Barrington said that based on the \$30,000 cost for the elevations and drawings for the police facility and because this is for two buildings, the estimate of \$60,000 was arrived at. Mr. Barrington noted that last year at the CIP committee, the goal that was expressed was a little more ambitious and that has been scaled back to this amount. Mrs. Bridle said that if this article passes, the town would have spent \$90,000 instead of \$150,000 on this work. She expressed concerns that when the contract with Landry Architects was being considered that the Board should have been made aware of it. Mr. Barrington said he believes that he told the Board that the RFP was being put together. Mr. Workman said that notwithstanding the value and need for the fire station, it perturbs him that Departments are finding thousands of dollars in the budget for items that are not budgeted. Mr. Pratt said that he would be in favor of this article.

Mr. Sullivan said that Chief Lipe knew that he will need a picture of what will be proposed at the beach and this study is necessary to accomplish that. He added that the town needs a new aerial ladder and it will not fit in the current beach station. Mr. Sullivan said that he was also surprised to hear about the \$30,000 contract. Mr. Barrington said that he views the budget as a planning tool and policy guideline, but understand that priorities have to be addressed. In this instance, the Fire Chief came to him and said that he felt this was an important step in the development of a new fire station and he was willing to give up some things to put this together and they agreed that the study was within the scope of the budget. Mr. Barrington apologized if the Board feels that was contrary to their wishes. Mr. Warburton said that he understands what Mr. Workman is saying, and there are just too many of these instances where extra money seems to be available for expenses that have not been approved. Mr. Workman said that the Board did not know that this was going on, and while he wants to do what is necessary to get the beach fire station done he wants to know what is not going to get done as a result.

Mr. Sullivan said that outside of this room, he believes the public is confident that the budget is being spent appropriately. Mr. Warburton said that he is still hearing about the elevator. Mrs. Bridle said that she represented to the Budget Committee that last year's budget was a "bare bones" budget and now she is learning about all of these things that have been done that were not budgeted and she can no longer believe it was a "bare bones" budget. She added that the Board is not seeing what the Town went without in order to accomplish something that was not approved.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED to put the article for \$60,000 forward for the space needs and conceptual drawings for the fire department.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mr. Workman said that he understands what the budget law allows, but it is a matter of perception.

ARTICLE R

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only a sum not to exceed \$350,000 to make improvements on ~~Bridehill Drive, John Stark Lane, Morrill Street, Ashbrook Drive, Wingate Street, Carolan Avenue, Thayer Road, Stowcroft Drive, and Island Path East~~ to include street repairs, reconstruction and associated materials and labor necessary to do the work, and also to include associated drainage system maintenance, upgrades and improvements, and to authorize withdrawal of up to \$350,000 from the Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

Mr. Barrington suggested that when the specific list of roads is developed the amount could be adjusted.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED to put the article forward to withdraw \$350,000 from the road improvement capital reserve fund.

Mr. Warburton SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE V

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of ~~\$31,675~~, generated from the sale of town-owned cemetery lots, to the Cemetery Burial Trust Fund; the interest from this Fund is withdrawn annually and deposited in the Town's General Fund as an offset to the amount appropriated in the operating budget for the maintenance of the cemeteries. This appropriation will not affect the Town's tax rate.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED to put the article forward.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE Q

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$650,000 from the Hampton Emergency Medical Services Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 15 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with

revenues generated from ambulance and emergency medical service calls, to provide, improve, and/or enhance ambulance and emergency medical services. Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

ARTICLE S

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$350,000 from the Hampton Recreation Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 19 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from recreation department programs and activities, to fund programs and activities through the Recreation and Parks Department? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

ARTICLE T

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$350,000 from revenues generated for the Hampton Private Detail Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 17 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from Police and Fire department private details, to fund Police and Fire Department private details? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

ARTICLE U

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$70,000 from revenues generated from the Hampton Cable TV Local Origination Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 21 of the 2000 Town Meeting and funded with revenues generated from the Cable TV local origination franchise agreement funds, to upgrade, expand, and enhance the development of the local origination channel? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

ARTICLE W

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$200,000 from revenues generated from the Fire Alarm Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 53 of the 2003 Town Meeting to operate, upgrade and maintain the Fire Alarm System in the Town of Hampton? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

ARTICLE X

Shall the Town of Hampton appropriate only the sum of \$200,000 from revenues generated from the Police Forfeiture Fund, a Special Revenue Fund created by Article 55 of the 2003 Town Meeting to carry out all lawful functions allowed under federal, state and local criminal justice forfeiture programs available in the Town of Hampton? Adoption of this article will have no effect on the Town's tax rate.

Mr. Warburton asked what would happen to the special revenue funds if the budget did not pass. Mr. Barrington said that these articles authorize the use of funds from the Special Revenue funds. If the article did not pass, there would not be authority to spend from these funds. The funding is dependent on receipt of the revenue into the fund. Mr. Workman asked if that meant if Article Q does not pass, the town would not have the authority to operate the ambulance. Mr. Barrington said that there would be no funds in the operating budget to operate the system since they have shifted to the special revenue fund. Mr. Sullivan said that some of the command staff, maintenance of the ambulances and medical supplies are covered by the fund. The operational staff is funded through the general fund. Mr. Barrington said that without the authority to spend from the SRF, the town would have to seriously look at what could be done. Mr. Barrington said that it is important that these special warrant articles are passed. Mr. Sullivan said that these articles actually have a positive effect on the tax rate. Mr. Warburton said that the Board wanted to limit the number of warrant articles, but understands that these are necessary.

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board put forward the special revenue fund articles.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

ARTICLE Y

Article to increase the Veteran's Exemption.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED that the Board put forward an article to increase the Veteran’s exemption to \$500.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

**VOTE: 4 FOR
1 ABSTAIN (Sullivan)**

ARTICLE Z

Shall the Town of Hampton authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate and enter into an agreement for the lease of Town land for a period of up to 30 years for the purpose of erecting and operating (publicly, privately, or as a joint venture between the Town and private parties) a wireless communications antennae tower? Such negotiations and such agreements shall be with vendors and under such conditions determined by the Board of Selectmen to be in the best interests of the Town.

Mr. Warburton explained that this article needs to be put forth because the prior article for this purpose that was approved named a specific company and an agreement could not be reached with that company.

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board put forward the article to authorize the erection and operation of a wireless communications tower in the best interest of the Town.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mrs. Bridle noted that this article does not specify a location. Mr. Barrington confirmed that it does not.

ARTICLE AA

Shall the Town of Hampton authorize the Board of Selectmen to have authority to waive deed restrictions in deeds of land formerly leased by the Town and/or in current leases from the Town, following the RSA 41:14 -a process?

Mr. Barrington said that last year when Town Meeting adopted RSA 41:14-a there was an exclusion in the article for leased land. This article will authorize the Selectmen to waive deed restrictions through the RSA 41:14-a process that were placed by Town Meeting that various property owners have had to take to Town Meeting in order to improve their property or sell their property.

Mr. Warburton asked how many leases still exist. Mr. Barrington said that there are 47 leases remaining. Mr. Workman said that he does not know if this is a big enough issue to put this forward. Mr. Barrington said that we are currently in litigation for a declaratory judgment on one property. Mr. Workman said that he did not think this was the year for this article. The Board decided not to put this article forward.

ARTICLE BB

Shall the Town of Hampton authorize the Board of Selectmen to establish and operate internet based services, to accept electronic payment options, to charge a “convenience fee” for providing such services, and to adjust such fees as may be necessary or desirable from time to time?

Mr. Barrington said that the origin of this article was to be able to provide automobile registrations on-line. He explained that the State has set up a service through a third-party vendor to allow towns to register the vehicles on line, with a convenience fee paid to the vendor, and the State and Town getting the full value of the registration. Mr. Barrington said that this could also be used for the recreation department to be allow residents to register for recreation programs on line. Mr. Sullivan asked if the town needs a web site for this. Mr. Barrington said that it could be done either way. He explained that with a town web site, when the resident went to pay for the program, they would be linked to the on-line payment service. For the auto registrations, it would all be handled through the third-party vendor, would not cost the town any money and would provide a service for the residents. Mr. Barrington said that for the recreation programs there would be no cost to the town, the fee for the programs would be the same and a convenience fee would be charged to cover the cost of using the credit card. This would provide the opportunity for residents to see the programs available on-line. Mr. Warburton said that someone in the recreation department would have to monitor the system to coordinate availability with walk-in registrations.

Mr. Workman said that there would be some training expense involved and he is in leery of program offerings not being kept up to date. Mr. Sullivan said that he would be in favor of this for auto registrations if it would be a convenience to the people of the town. Mrs. Bridle said that she is not in favor of this and the convenience is mailing in auto registrations for .37 cents. Mr. Pratt said he would be in favor of this if it is a convenience for the residents and there is no cost to the town. Mr. Warburton said that there is an expense to this and it is important to keep it updated. Mr. Warburton stated that there should be an analysis done of how many people would use the service before implementing it so he was not in favor of putting the article forward this year. On a 3-2 decision the Board decided not to put this article forward.

Recreation Department

The Board discussed a notice in the newspaper about registering for Hampton Attack programs through the Recreation Department. The Board asked the Town Manager to find out what organizations they schedule and/or register participants for.

VI. MINUTES

The minutes of November 24, 2003 were accepted as written.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Current Use Application – Map 63, Lot 1

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the Consent Agenda be approved.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Richard Reniere, 29 Highland Avenue said that he was pleased to see the Selectmen recommending increases to the elderly exemptions and asked that the income limits also be increased. He explained that many married coupled in his generation, with two people on social security are not eligible for the exemption based on income. He suggested that the combined net income be increased from \$43,000 to \$50,000 and the single net income be increased from \$26,000 to \$30,000. The Town Manager will check with the Assessor to see if the income limits can increased.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the meeting be adjourned. (9:05 PM)

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman

