

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING LANCASTER MASSACHUSETTS MAY 2, 2005

Abbreviated Notes

The Annual Town Meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Moderator Eugene Christoph. A total of 162 registered voters and 14 non-voting guests were signed in by Registrars Cecilia Thurlow, Anna DiPietro and John Ranieri. Vic Koivumaki, Jean Lidstone and Frank Streeter served as counters during the meeting.

Fourteen members of the Mary Rowlandson Elementary School 4th and 5th grade chorus led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and then, under the direction of Pamela Cross, sang "Live Well" and "Thankful for the USA." Moderator Christoph asked for a moment of silence for Daniel P. Downing, Peter O'Malley and Robert J. Frommer, long-time Lancaster residents who had passed away in 2004 after dedicating years of service to the Town of Lancaster. Select Board Chairman Joanne Foster offered the Town's sympathy and support for the family of Alison Murphy, who had died tragically in a skiing accident the previous week. Moderator Christoph expressed the Town's appreciation to outgoing Select Board Chair Joanne Foster and outgoing Finance Committee Chair Nancy Stell-Kiely.

Nancy Stell-Kiely – with assistance from Nashoba Regional School District Assistant Superintendent John Antonucci, Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District Assistant Superintendent-Director Thomas Markham, and fellow Finance Committee member John Wojciak – presented a slide show on the proposed \$14,118,246 Lancaster annual budget for FY2006. The budget slide show presentation is attached as a separate document.

Mr. Markham also announced that a Lancaster student, John Pelletier, had just won honors as the top computer science student in Massachusetts and was going on to the national competition in June.

The reading of the warrant was unanimously waived by the townspeople in attendance.

Article 1 – The reading of the Annual Report was waived; Outgoing Board of Selectman Chair Joanne Foster welcomed residents to the Town Meeting and thanked them for their support during her term of office. She thanked Dave Dunn and Company for printing the annual report, the department heads and committee chairs for writing their reports, and Clerk Sue Thompson for compiling the town report. She then recognized the long service of former Town Moderator James Burgoyne, and reported on the progress of the McNamara Task Force that had been formed after the November election. The Task Force has filed the Martin H. McNamara Bill, which would ensure survivor's benefits for any on-call public safety official in the Commonwealth who dies in the line of duty.

It was moved and unanimously voted to pull discussion of **Article 12**, the FY2006 budget, ahead of the other articles.

Article 12 – The Finance Committee proposed to amend the FY2006 budget by reducing the Nashoba Regional School District's budget by \$150,000, which would require a similar reduction in

the Bolton and Stow assessments bringing the total NRSD budget reduction to about \$450,000. After much debate, the amendment was defeated by majority vote. Marietta Poras then proposed an amendment that would eliminate the \$7,320 line item for Nashoba Board of Health Nursing Services from the budget. That amendment also was defeated by majority vote. Discussion followed about the need for a \$150,000 Proposition 2½ Override vote in next week's Annual Town Election to fund the full budget. In the end, the Town voted, by majority vote, to appropriate \$14,038,691 and transfer \$79,555 from the Water Enterprise Fund to defray the expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2005.

The full approved budget is attached as a separate document.

Article 2 – The Town voted unanimously to authorize the Treasurer-Collector to enter into a Compensating Balance Agreement or Agreements for FY2006, pursuant to G.L. c. 44, §53F.

Article 3 – The Town voted unanimously to request the Board of Assessors to commit \$15,000 from the FY2006 Overlay Account for Abatements to fund the Senior Citizen Work-off Abatement Program.

Article 4 – After some discussion and assurance that the clean-up at the Highway Barn was expected to be finally completed next fiscal year, the Town voted unanimously to take \$45,000 from Free Cash to finish the environmental remediation of the Department of Public Works Highway Garage.

Article 5 – The Town voted unanimously to authorize the following FY2006 Revolving Funds, in accordance with G.L. c. 44, §53E½:

REVOLVING FUND	AUTHORIZED TO SPEND FUND	REVENUE SOURCE	USE OF FUND	SPENDING LIMIT	DISPOSITION OF FY05 FUND BALANCE
Council on Aging	Council on Aging	Senior Newsletter Advertising	Newsletter printing/ mailing; other activities	\$ 2,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Cross Connection Program	Board of Public Works/Water Ent.	Survey/Inspection Fees	Cross Connection Program Expenses	\$ 5,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Disability Commission	Disability Commission	Activities and Donations	Activities and Programs for Disabled persons	\$ 2,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Historical Commission	Historical Commission	Research fees & other charges	Research-related wages and expenses	\$ 2,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Library Book Fines	Library Trustees	Late Book & Materials Fines	Books - Materials	\$ 4,750	Balance Available for Expenditure
Library Photocopy	Library Trustees	Patron photocopy Fees	Photocopy equipment and supplies	\$ 675	Balance Available for Expenditure
Library Lost Items	Library Trustees	Lost Book/Item replacement charge	Books - Materials	\$ 500	Balance Available for Expenditure
M.A.R.T.	Council on Aging	Reimbursement - M.A.R.T./Bus fees	Wages and Expenses for Senior Van operation	\$ 45,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Planning Board	Planning Board	Fees	Planning-related expenses	\$ 50,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Community Development Legal Ads	Community Development	Reimbursement for Advertising	Legal Ad publications	\$ 2,500	Balance Available for Expenditure

Publications Reprinting	Town Clerk	Publications Fees	Publications reprinting expenses	\$ 2,500	Balance Available for Expenditure
Recycling	Recycling Committee	Donations - Fees - Sale of products	Operating Expenses	\$ 15,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Sewer District Collection	Finance Director	Lancaster Sewer District payment	Finance Department Operational Expenses	\$ 5,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Tax Title Account	Collector-Treasurer	Interest/Approp. Other Payments	Tax Title Taking Legal expenses	\$ 35,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Town Forest	Town Forest Committee	Gifts and sale of forest products	Town Forest improvements	\$ 3,400	Balance Available for Expenditure
Veterans' Memorial	Selectmen	Appropriations and gifts	War Veterans' Memorial	\$ 50,000	Balance Available for Expenditure
Workers Compensation Advance	Selectmen	Reimbursements/ Appropriations	Advance to employees on workers compensation	\$ 10,000	Balance Available for Expenditure

Article 6 – The Town voted not to authorize the Board of Selectmen to acquire by purchase, gift, eminent domain, or otherwise, parcels of land tax and assessed pursuant to G.L. Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B and therefore not to authorize the Treasurer, with the Approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow a sum not to exceed \$1,000,000.00 as is necessary for such acquisition. A two-thirds majority vote was required for passage of this article, and the vote was 44 yeas, 27 nays.

Article 7 – The Town approved, by majority vote, the following Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2006 and the ensuing two fiscal years as set forth below:

Town of Lancaster

3 Year Capital Plan - Procurement Schedule

Department		Item	FY06	FY07	FY08
Police	Police Cruiser		29,400	30,870	32,414
	Computer Upgrades		20,000		
	Bullet Proof Vests			12,800	
	Police Station Carpet/Paint			25,000	
	Radar Trailer				16,000
Fire	Radio System Replacement – 5% Federal Grant Match		7,500		
	Replace 1984 Rescue Unit		32,500		
	Command Vehicle		39,500		
	Brush Truck/Utility with Skid Tank		62,000		
	Replace 1975 & 1977 Pumpers with 1 used Pumper		125,000		
	Thermal Image Camera			15,000	
	Hovercraft for Ice Rescues			25,000	
	Refurbish 1990 KME Pumper			100,000	
	Replace 1971 Tanker				325,000
Ambulance	Ambulance			127,500	
School	LB – Kitchen Replacement Project		15,000	15,000	15,000
	LB – French Drain			15,000	

Highway	4x4 Hydro Tractor with attachments Re-Roof & Paint Cemetery Garage Town Burial Tomb Repair Cemetery Hot-Topping 40,000GVW truck/snowplow/snow wing/sander 1 Ton 4x4 Truck with Plow Tractor with Attachments 46,000GVW Diesel Dump/Catch Basin Cleaner Salt Shed Maintenance/Repairs DPW Office Building Expansion 1 Ton 4x4 Truck – Water Division	15,000 30,000	10,000 20,000 130,000 42,000 70,000	180,000 10,000 200,000 41,000
Town Buildings	Sewer Connection – Town Buildings		20,000	
Computer Tech	Computer purchases/replacements Municipal Planning & Land Management Software AutoCad System and Printer/Plotter	12,000 25,000	12,600 6045	13,230
Annual Total		412,900	676,815	832,644

Article 8 – The Town voted unanimously to appropriate the following sums of money, to be expended by the respective Departments for the capital projects and purchases itemized below.

a. Police Cruiser	
Amount:	\$29,400
Funds to be expended by:	Police Department
Purpose:	To purchase a new marked police cruiser as a replacement for a 2003 model.
Funding Source:	Free Cash

b. Police Computer Upgrades	
Amount:	\$20,000
Funds to be expended by:	Police Department
Purpose:	To replace ten complete computer systems and printers
Funding Source:	\$10,000 Police Grant \$10,000 Free Cash

c. Fire Radio System – 5% Match for Federal Grant	
Amount:	\$7,500
Funds to be expended by:	Fire Department
Purpose:	To Replace/Upgrade the low band radio system for the Fire Department with a high band frequency system
Funding Source:	Free Cash

d. Fire Brush/Utility Truck with Skid Tank	
Amount:	\$62,000
Funds to be expended by:	Fire Department
Purpose:	To purchase a new 2005/2006 Ford F450 with Skid Tank as a replacement for a 1977 Ford Pumper/Forestry truck
Funding Source:	Free Cash

e. Fire Pump Truck Replacements	
Amount:	\$125,000
Funds to be expended by:	Fire Department

Purpose:	To purchase one rebuilt Pumper as a replacement for the existing 1975 Pumper and 1977 Ford Pumper/Forestry truck.
Funding Source:	Free Cash

f. Fire Command Vehicle

Amount:	\$39,500
Funds to be expended by:	Fire Department
Purpose:	To purchase a new 2005/2006 replacement vehicle as a replacement for a 1993 Ford Crown Victoria.
Funding Source:	Free Cash

g. Fire Rescue Unit

Amount:	\$32,500
Funds to be expended by:	Fire Department
Purpose:	To replace the 1984 Rescue Unit with a used Rescue Unit.
Funding Source:	Free Cash

h. Luther Burbank Kitchen Replacement

Amount:	\$15,000
Funds to be expended by:	School Committee
Purpose:	To implement the first year of the five-year replacement plan for the Luther Burbank School Building
Funding Source:	Free Cash

i. 4x4 Hydro Tractor with attachments for purpose of mowing the landfill and other related duties

Amount:	\$15,000
Funds to be expended by:	DPW
Purpose:	To purchase a new 2005/2006 John Deere 4x4 Diesel tractor with Front Loader, Under Deck Mower, Backhoe and Snowplow
Funding Source:	Free Cash

j. Re-Roof Cemetery Garage and Storage Building

Amount:	\$30,000
Funds to be expended by:	DPW
Purpose:	To Re-roof the Cemetery main building and storage building.
Funding Source:	Cemetery Expendable Interest

k. Computer Replacements



Amount:	\$12,000
Funds to be expended by:	Chief Procurement Officer
Purpose:	To purchase replacements for six complete computer systems with printers
Funding Source:	Free Cash

l. Municipal Planning & Land Management Software

Amount:	\$25,000
Funds to be expended by:	Community Development Office
Purpose:	To purchase and install Municipal Planning and Land Management Software
Funding Source:	Master Planning Grant/Gift Funds

Article 9 – The Town voted, by majority vote, to amend the ***Personnel Compensation Wage and Salary Schedule*** by increasing all amounts by 2% effective July 1, 2005 (*detail below*).

Proposed FY2006 Wage Grid

							
GRADE	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7

1 hourly	8.38	8.73	9.10	9.48	9.87	10.29	10.71
annual	17,497.44	18,228.24	19,000.80	19,794.24	20,608.56	21,485.52	22,362.48
2 hourly	9.76	10.16	10.59	11.04	11.49	11.97	12.47
annual	20,378.88	21,214.08	22,111.92	23,051.52	23,991.12	24,993.36	26,037.36
3 hourly	10.70	11.15	11.61	12.10	12.61	13.14	13.69
annual	22,341.60	23,281.20	24,241.68	25,264.80	26,329.68	27,436.32	28,584.72
4 hourly	11.58	12.07	12.58	13.11	13.66	14.23	14.82
annual	24,179.04	25,202.16	26,267.04	27,373.68	28,522.08	29,712.24	30,944.16
5 hourly	12.44	12.95	13.49	14.07	14.65	15.27	15.89
annual	25,974.72	27,039.60	28,167.12	29,378.16	30,589.20	31,883.76	33,178.32
6 hourly	12.86	13.40	13.96	14.56	15.15	15.79	16.44
annual	26,851.68	27,979.20	29,148.48	30,401.28	31,633.20	32,969.52	34,326.72
7 hourly	13.90	14.48	15.09	15.72	16.37	17.05	17.76
annual	27,770.40	28,918.80	30,129.84	31,382.64	32,698.08	34,055.28	35,475.12
8 hourly	14.49	15.10	15.73	16.38	17.07	17.79	18.52
annual	30,255.12	31,528.80	32,844.24	34,201.44	35,642.16	37,145.52	38,669.76
9 hourly	15.13	15.77	16.42	17.12	17.83	18.56	19.34
annual	31,591.44	32,927.76	34,284.96	35,746.56	37,229.04	38,753.28	40,381.92
10 hourly	16.52	17.21	17.93	18.69	19.48	20.30	21.14
annual	34,493.76	35,934.48	37,437.84	39,024.72	40,674.24	42,386.40	44,140.32
11 hourly	18.78	19.56	20.38	21.23	22.11	23.04	24.00
annual	39,212.64	40,841.28	42,553.44	44,328.24	46,165.68	48,107.52	50,112.00
12 hourly	19.24	20.04	20.89	21.76	22.66	23.60	24.60
annual	40,173.12	41,843.52	43,618.32	45,434.88	47,314.08	49,276.80	51,364.80
13 hourly	21.01	21.89	22.81	23.77	24.76	25.80	26.88
annual	43,868.88	45,706.32	47,627.28	49,631.76	51,698.88	53,870.40	56,125.44
14 hourly	23.49	24.49	25.50	26.57	27.67	28.84	30.04
annual	49,047.12	51,135.12	53,244.00	55,478.16	57,774.96	60,217.92	62,723.52
15 hourly	24.77	25.81	26.89	28.02	29.18	30.41	31.68
annual	51,719.76	53,891.28	56,146.32	58,505.76	60,927.84	63,496.08	66,147.84
16 hourly	25.76	26.83	27.96	29.12	30.35	31.61	32.93
annual	53,786.88	56,021.04	58,380.48	60,802.56	63,370.80	66,001.68	68,757.84

Article 10 – The Town voted unanimously to appropriate \$499,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund to finance the operation of the Water Department for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2005 (*amended detail below*),

I. Water Enterprise Revenues	
User Charges	490,000
Connection Fees	4,000
Water Enterprise Available Funds	-
Investment Income	5,000
Total Revenues	499,000
II. Costs Appropriated in the Enterprise Fund	
Salaries and Wages	191,190
Expenses	128,950
Capital Outlay – Equipment	0
Capital Outlay – Improvements	0
Reserve Fund	4,000
Debt Principal and Interest	24,000
Cross Connection	6,000
Budgeted Surplus	65,305
Total Costs Appropriated in E.F.	419,445
III. Costs Appropriated in General Fund to be Charged to the Enterprise Fund	
Indirect Costs	19,818
Benefits	42,883
Pension Costs	16,854
Total Costs Appropriated in G.F.	79,555
Total Costs	499,000

Article 11 – The Town voted, by majority vote, to appropriate \$47,690 from Water Enterprise Available funds to the Water Enterprise Capital Fund

Article 13 – The Town voted unanimously to accept the provisions of G.L. Chapter 54, §16A, authorizing the Town Clerk to appoint a person to fill a vacancy in the position of warden, clerk or inspector, or the deputy of any such officer, if any, if not present at the opening of the polls, said appointee to be an enrolled voter of the same political party as the absent officer, if any competent person enrolled in such party is present and willing to serve.

Article 14 – The Town voted unanimously to accept the provisions of G.L. Chapter 32B sec. 18, requiring eligible retirees, spouses, and dependents if enrolled in Medicare part A, to transfer to a Medicare extension plan, provided that benefits under said plan and Medicare part A and B together shall be of comparable actuarial value to those under the retiree’s existing coverage

Article 15 – The Town voted unanimously to amend the Town Bylaws, Finance Committee, to elect members of the Finance Committee to alternating 3-year terms. Any vacancies in the Finance Committee will be filled in accordance with G.L. c.41, §11.

Article 16 – The Town voted, by majority vote, to rescind the vote taken under Article 15 of the 1950 Annual Town Meeting and adopt a bylaw that authorizes the Building Commissioner or Inspector of Buildings to appoint the Inspector of Wires for a period of not less than one year and not more than three years.

Article 17 – This article, regarding a change in the way the Building Commissioner is appointed and requiring a change in the Town’s Building Bylaw, was tabled indefinitely, by unanimous vote.

Article 18 – The Town voted unanimously to amend the Nashoba Regional School District Agreement, Section 4, Article A and Article C (full text as it appears in the warrant).

Article 19 – The Town voted, by majority vote, to amend the Personnel By-Law, Sec. A, paragraph 3, to allow a quorum of two rather than three members.

Article 20 – The Town voted unanimously to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate and enter into an inter-municipal joint purchasing agreement for the software and services used by the Board of Assessors.

Article 21 – The Town voted to accept any public funds for repairs to roadways, culverts, bridges, water systems and tree planting, and snow removal, and to authorize the Collector-Treasurer to take from available funds and to borrow in anticipation of authorized reimbursements.

Article 22 – The Town voted unanimously to take from available funds and authorize the Treasurer-Collector to borrow \$189,835 in anticipation of reimbursements, for road improvements and other projects provided for under Chapter 90 Local Transportation Aid. The Board of Public Works is authorized to expend funds authorized by this article subject to pre-approval of a Capital Expenditure Plan by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

Article 23 – The Town voted, by majority vote, to take \$18,794 from Free Cash for the purpose of paying back wages to the Lancaster Fire Department.

Article 24 – This article, submitted by a citizen petition, asked for \$5,000 to be appropriated to fix the tennis courts at Thayer Field. Because there was no back-up, and the repairs would have to go out to bid, this article was withdrawn.

Article 25 – The Town voted unanimously to transfer \$134,507 from Free Cash to the Stabilization Fund.

Moderator Christoph adjourned the Annual Town Meeting at 10:55 p.m.