# Special Town Meeting October 29, 2018 - Minutes Bethlehem Baptist Church, 123 Allen St., Hampden, MA Moderator Robert L Howarth called the meeting to order at 7:08pm- attendance 302

# Article 1. Computer Hardware/Software & Technical Upgrade

the Town voted to transfer from unappropriated available funds, \$20,000 to purchase computer hardware, software and technical support to upgrade the Town's Information Technology.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

#### Article 2. Outreach Program Funds for Senior Center

the Town voted to transfer from unappropriated available funds, \$1,037 to replace funding previously provided by the State and to be used for the Senior Center Outreach Program at the Senior Center.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

# Article 3. Stormwater Reporting Funding

The Town voted to transfer from unappropriated available funds, <u>\$36,300</u> into the Stormwater Account to be used to satisfy State mandated Stormwater Reporting.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

# Article 4. **Proposed Amendment to Hampden Wilbraham Regional School District**The Town defeated a motion to amend Section III, Paragraph B of the Regional Agreement . *Motion failed*

## Article 5. **Police Dispatch**

The Town voted to amend and reduce the fiscal year 2019 budget by deducting \$232,763\$ from line item 57.2 Police General Salaries; deducting \$69,800\$ from line item 57.4 Police General Expense and deducting \$49,781\$ from line item 7.2 Employee Benefits as these amounts related to the Regional Dispatch discussion at the Annual Town Meeting on May 14, 2018 A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

## Article 6. Non Bargained Salary Adjustments

The Town voted to transfer \$33,414.36 from unappropriated available funds and that a specified portion of that sum be transferred to each of the various non-bargained salary accounts for salary rate adjustments as detailed in the handout provided for this Special Town Meeting.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

#### Article 7. **Citizen's Petition**

The Town voted to direct the Hampden Selectmen to take all necessary steps to revive the lawsuit brought by the Town against the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School Committee that was the subject of the Settlement Agreement signed by the Hampden Selectmen Chair and the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School Committee Vice-Chair. These steps shall include but are not necessarily limited to the Selectmen's requesting immediately, but in no event more than 30 days from the date of the Hampden Town meeting (October, 2018), that the Superior Court vacate the judgment of dismissal in that case as described in the Settlement Agreement.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

### Article 8. **Citizen's Petition**

The Town voted that prior to entering any future settlement agreements with the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School Committee relative to school issues, the Hampden Selectmen will hold a duly convened Town Meeting where a discussion and vote on the matter will be held.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

#### Article 9. **Citizen's Petition – Solar Moratorium**

The Town voted to amend Article 9, as follows, by adding a new section 7.17: 7.17 TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ENERGY SYSTEMS

The Town of Hampden recently has been the target of interest for the construction of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy systems which could potentially affect the Town as a whole. The Town of Hampden is predominantly rural and undeveloped and it is a Right to Farm community.

There is an immediate identified community need to revise zoning regulations to ensure that such uses and development will be consistent with the Town's long-term planning interests. It is crucial that the Town act now to establish a temporary moratorium on the use of land and the construction of structures related to such groundmounted solar photovoltaic energy systems and the issuance of permits in connection with same.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the Zoning Bylaw to the

contrary, the Town hereby adopts a temporary one-year moratorium on the issuance of permits for the use of land for ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy systems that are not for residential accessory use, effective immediately upon Town vote. This moratorium shall not apply to ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy system projects already approved by the Planning Board. It also shall not apply to groundmounted solar photovoltaic energy system project(s) to be installed on the parcels where the Town's landfill and transfer station are located, the use of these parcels for this purpose were the subject of favorable votes at prior Town Meetings. During the moratorium one-year period, the Town shall conduct a bylaw review of towns of similar size and character, undertake a planning process that addresses the potential impacts of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy systems in Hampden, consider the long-term objectives for such systems and their impact on health safety and welfare of Hampden's citizenry, and determine how the town shall reasonably regulate such systems and, finally to amend the Zoning Bylaws Section 7.16 accordingly.

The provisions of this zoning bylaw 7.17 are severable. If any provision, paragraph, sentence, or clause of this zoning bylaw or the application thereof to any person, establishment, or circumstances shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or application of this zoning bylaw.

Moderator declared the Motion to Amend passed by a 2/3 vote

The Town voted to put in place a temporary one-year moratorium on ground mounted Solar Energy Systems by adding to the Hampden Zoning Bylaws a new section as amended.

A 2/3 Vote was declared by the Moderator

## Article 10. School Litigation Legal Expenses

The Town voted to transfer from unappropriated available funds, <u>\$50,000</u> for legal and/or professional fees for the purpose of modifying the regional school agreement or resolving other outstanding regional school issues.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

## Article 11. Reducing Tax Rate

The Town voted to transfer \$310,000 from unappropriated available funds for the purpose of reducing the tax rate for Fiscal Year 2019.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator

#### Article 12. **General Stabilization Account**

The Town voted to transfer \$270,299.64 from unappropriated available funds into the General Stabilization Account.

A majority vote was declared by the Moderator