

## SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

### July 20, 2011

Moderator Ned Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. JP Morrison and Archie Auger led those present in reciting our Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Gordon introduced Raymah Simpson, Town Clerk. Rick Alpers, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen introduced the Members of the Board and the Town Administrator. Shaun Lagueux, Chairman of the Budget Committee and the Budget Committee members introduced themselves.

The Moderator explained the meeting rules to those in attendance. All questions and comments should be directed to the Moderator. Only registered voters will be allowed to speak. Anyone else who wishes to speak will need permission from the voters present. No one will be allowed to speak a second time until everyone who wants to speak has been heard once. Any amendments need to be in writing and presented to the Moderator. Anyone who wishes to speak should come to the microphone.

The Moderator read Article 1:

**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty five thousand dollars (\$65,000) for the purchase of a 1.1 acre parcel of land located at 496 Lake Street (Route 3A) shown on the Town of Bristol Tax map as lot 224/53. The money for the purchase will come from the Fund Balance and no funds will be raised through taxation.**

**The Budget Committee recommends this article 8-3**

**The Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0**

Chairman Alpers made a motion to accept the article. There was a second from Vice-Chairman Shackett. Chairman Alpers explained some of the history of the Board's efforts to secure the property previously. The Board felt that it would be a great parcel for the Town to own given the history of its use and its proximity to the River. Chairman Alpers noted that funds from the Unreserved Fund Balance or "surplus" would be used to purchase the property. There would be no additional funds raised through taxation. Presently, there are no plans to place the property in a conservation easement. The property would be cleaned up by the Highway department and would be used as a riverside park with a one way entrance and exit. The Board has approached the Rotary Club to see if they would donate some picnic tables and the Town is looking into securing a grant for some playground equipment.

The Moderator asked if anyone else would like to speak.

## **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES (*CONTINUED*)**

### **July 20, 2011**

David Hill asked if the property extended to the River. Chairman Alpers responded that it runs to the high water mark.

Mr. Hill also asked about liability. Chairman Alpers read an excerpt from a report received from the New Hampshire Municipal Association, our insurance provider, who had recently visited the property at the request of the Town Administrator. The report explained what should be posted for signage at the property.

Michael Bannan spoke against the purchase. He felt that we should not spend Town funds on this property and that we should use the six acres we already have on the other side of the river. He also suggested some other parcels to consider and expressed his disappointment with the Board for not pursuing these other parcels.

Don Martin spoke in favor of the purchase. He owns the property on the other side of the road and noted that many people use the area. He felt it made good economic sense to purchase the property.

Leslie Dion spoke in favor of the purchase. She felt that it is a beautiful area that many people use. She mentioned that the Rotary would donate an initial amount of one thousand dollars to purchase items for the park.

Nancy Gavalis asked if the parcel could be built on. Chairman Alpers answered yes. She also asked if it was in the floodplain. Selectman Alpers answered yes. She asked who owns the small turnout area further up route 3A. Chairman Alpers answered that it is most likely part of the State right of way.

Boake Morrison spoke against the purchase. He did not think it could be built on. He also felt we had other areas to use along the river and there were too many restrictions on the property.

Dorcas Gordon spoke in favor of the purchase. She felt it would be a good addition to many of the recreational paths from the Lake extending toward downtown. It would help make Bristol the type of Town people want to live in. She feels it would be a good return for the funds used to purchase it.

Ruth Whittier spoke against the purchase. She did not want to take a commercial property off the market nor spend the money for lawyers to pursue the Special Meeting.

## **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES (*CONTINUED*)**

### **July 20, 2011**

Paul Simard spoke against the purchase. He mentioned that the Budget Committee vote was not unanimous. He was concerned that there might be hazardous waste on the site. He also felt we should not take a commercial property off the market. He felt that the Board had not done it's homework on the purchase. He had concerns with the liability should someone fall in the river. He felt that the Town was wasting money on this purchase.

Chairman Alpers mentioned again that liability was not an issue as the parcel had been visited by our insurance provider.

JP Morrison spoke against the purchase. He felt that the money could be better spent on other items such as two police cruisers or the door off a ladder truck. He felt that the property was not going anywhere and there was no reason to purchase it now.

Chairman Alpers made a motion to close debate on the question. Mark Chevalier seconded the motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

JP Morrison asked for a ballot vote. The Moderator asked for a show of hands from those who wished to have a ballot vote. A sufficient number of those present raised their hands so a ballot vote was conducted.

Those present that were eligible to vote were verified by the Supervisors of the Check list and given a paper ballot. After those present had voted the ballots were tallied. There were 103 vote cast. Seventy six voted in favor of the Article, twenty seven voted against the Article. The Moderator declared the Article passed.

With no further business to come before the meeting, Chairman Alpers made a motion to dissolve the meeting. The motion was seconded by Barbara Greenwood and passed by a voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted:

Raymah Simpson  
Town Clerk/Tax Collector