

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
Proctor School – Woodbury Auditorium
April 22, 2014**

The two articles in the Warrant for the Meeting and the action of the Town thereto.

The Moderator called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:08 p.m., stating a quorum was present. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Moderator followed with the reading of the Warrant and the Return of the Constable noting the meeting had been duly posted and advertised as required by law. He continued with the following announcements:

1. Boxford Cable is taping our meeting for future broadcast. We thank Brad Sweet and Baxter Demers for this service.
2. Microphones have been provided in the auditorium for your convenience. We ask that you use them when addressing the meeting.
3. We also request that anyone desiring to address the meeting, state his or her name and street address after being recognized by the Moderator.
4. By long standing tradition in the Town, a recommendation of the Finance Committee amounts to a motion, made and seconded and before the town for debate.
5. If the Finance Committee recommends “no action” on a particular article, and a voter desires positive action on the article, the voter may and should, during discussion of the Finance Committee recommendation, state his or her intention to move for positive action on the article or an amended article if the Finance Committee’s “no action” recommendation is voted down; but, the vote will be taken on the Finance Committee’s recommendation of “no action” before a motion for positive action is in order.
6. Finally, if a voter desires to move an amendment to a Finance Committee recommendation or to any other motion, I will require a written proposed motion to amend for review by myself and Town Counsel prior to any action on it. We have printed forms for these motions and will be happy to help anyone who needs assistance in making it out.

The Moderator moved to his introductions. First, he introduced Ann Gill, the Town Clerk, and her assistant Mary Beth Willis. He then continued with introductions of the Board of Selectmen, Town Counsel, and the Town Administrator as well as the Finance Committee

The Moderator then moved to Article First.

ARTICLE FIRST: REPORTS

No reports were presented and Article was passed over.

ARTICLE SECOND: CITIZENS PETITION-RESCIND ARTICLE TWENTY-SECOND OF THE 2009 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

To see if the Town will vote to repeal or rescind Article Twenty Two of the Special Town Meeting held on May 5, 2009 which authorized the Board of Selectman to participate in a Regional Emergency Communication Center Intergovernmental Agreement.

The Finance Committee recommended that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectman to enter into an agreement for a period or up to ten years to provide emergency and non-emergency police, fire, and medical dispatch services with other municipalities in Essex County.

The Finance Committee recommends no action.

Much debate followed. Resident Philip Mahoney asked the Moderator if two guest speakers from out of town could discuss why the Article should be rescinded. The two speakers were Michael Pirrotta of Beverly, developer of the E911 system, and Keith Lucey of Danvers, formerly of Topsfield and a former Selectman in Danvers. Topsfield Fire Chief Ronald Giovannacci, was acknowledged by the Moderator, and stated he didn’t have a problem with that as long as guest speakers in favor of no action would also be

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allowed to speak. These speakers included Topsfield Police Chief Evan Haglund, Tom Dubas of Peabody, Director of the Regional Emergency Communication Center. The Moderator stated it was up to the residents, and the residents voted to allow the out of town speakers.

Various residents voiced their concerns, as well as asked questions of the Speakers as well as the Board of Selectmen. Fire Captain and Topsfield Resident Jen Collins-Brown spoke from a Fire Fighter's point of view on the importance of having more than one dispatcher listening because of the perils of the job and how the dispatcher is the one person who is in constant contact with the Firefighters. Currently Topsfield only has one, where the RECC allows for more. As the debate continued, it was clear that two indirectly related issues were emerging – improving the quality of dispatch, and keeping the police station properly staffed, as was noted by resident John Spencer.

At 8:39, Philip Knowles of 75 High Street motioned to move the question, and it was seconded. No objections were made and the question was moved to a vote. A hand count was required and the vote was 145 to 48 in favor of the Finance Committee's recommendation of no action.

The Moderator stated he would now entertain a motion to dissolve the Special Town Meeting. The motion was duly made, seconded and voted unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m. There were two hundred and fourteen (214) registered voters in attendance.

