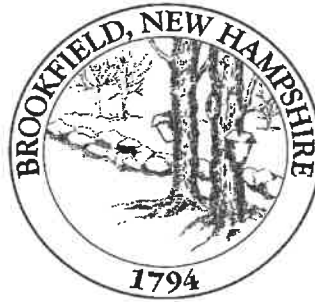


## Warrant – Town Meeting March 18, 2023



*State of New Hampshire*

The resilience of Brookfield residents was evident on Election Day when voters braved a Nor-easter to participate in the democratic process. After careful consideration and collaboration with other moderators in the GWSD and Town officials, it was decided to move forward with the Election as planned on March 14<sup>th</sup>. It marked the first time we invoked the new eligibility for absentee ballots due to the declaration of a weather emergency, and a total of 153 total votes were cast.

Moderator Jim Cowles called the 229<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Town of Brookfield to order at 3:00 PM on Saturday, March 18, 2023 with 43 registered Brookfield voters in attendance. After leading residents in the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to honor our Service Members and Town residents who passed away during the year, the Moderator introduced Selectmen Richard Surette, Richard Zacher, and Brian Robischeau. The Moderator also recognized those officials who are leaving office and thanked them for their service to the Town.

Moderator Cowles provided the meeting format and asked for a motion to dispense with the reading of the Rules of Order that are printed on the inside cover of the annual report. The motion was made by Ed Gauthier, seconded by Susan Raban, and passed unanimously. The results of the Election and Warrant Articles 1 through 9 acted on by ballot on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 were announced by the Moderator.

### **Election Results:**

#### **Article 1: Town Officers**

Selectman (3 years): Ed Gauthier	84 votes
Moderator (1 years): James Cowles	138 votes
Trustee of the Trust Fund (3 years): Susan Weiske	17 votes by write-in
Cemetery Trustee (3 years): Roberta Holland	137 votes
Planning Board (3 years): Edmund Ingalls	136 votes

**Article 2:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: delete the definition of "accessory building" and adopt instead a definition of "ancillary structure" as anything constructed, the use of which requires location on or in the ground, or attachment to something having a location on or in the ground, which is incidental to the primary dwelling. *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0).*

**Yes: 104** No: 42

**Article 3:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: amend the building lot requirements in the Residential-Agricultural Zone to require that ancillary structures of greater than 50 square feet in area must be set back at least 20 feet from any lot line. *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0).*

**Yes: 111** No: 38

**Article 4:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: amend the building lot requirements in the Residential-Agricultural Zone to require that frontage on a private road be on an approved private road; and to require that lot access be provided from the required road frontage? *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Board approves (6-0-1).*

**Yes: 116** No: 32

**Article 5:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: amend the building lot requirements in the Residential-Agricultural Zone to require that lots of less than 2 acres in the Cedar Park subdivision comply with the generally applicable side or rear setbacks if the side or rear property line abuts a right of way, pond, lake, stream, brook, watercourse, marsh, or seasonally wet area? *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0).*

**Yes: 126** No: 20

**Article 6:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 5 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: to delete from the ordinance sections identifying "non-permitted uses," which will clarify that the ordinance is a permissive zoning ordinance and that only those uses which are listed in the ordinance are permitted. *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0).*

**Yes: 104** No: 40

**Article 7:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 6 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: to replace Article II, A (1)(b) regarding home businesses and home occupations with new language defining and separating the two uses and allowing both in the Residential Agricultural Zone by operating permit issued by the Selectmen upon a finding that certain criteria are met. Home occupations are uses conducted entirely within a dwelling or accessory building only by members of the family which are domiciled at the property; home businesses would allow up to four non-resident individuals. Home occupations may not change the outside appearance of any buildings, have any outside storage or display areas, generate unusual amounts of traffic or create a hazard or nuisance to any person or property. Home businesses must be secondary to the residential use of the property and not alter the character of the neighborhood or reduce surrounding property

values; may not result in any external evidence of the business activities; have no outdoor display of goods or materials or equipment unless screened; have no window displays; or change the exterior appearance of the structures on the property, unless approved by the Selectmen. *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0)*

**Yes: 104**    **No: 42**

**Article 8:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 7 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: add to the conditions under which Accessory Dwelling Units are permitted a restriction that the area of the ADU may not exceed 30% of the total floor area of the single family dwelling, including the ADU, or 750 square feet, whichever is larger; and to prohibit the use of campers, RVs, or manufactured homes as ADUs. *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (4-3-0)*

**Yes: 77**    **No: 58**

**Article 9:** Are you in favor of adoption of Amendment No. 8 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Brookfield zoning ordinance as follows: add the following general provision to ensure compliance with HB 1021 (2022): "The use of land or structures primarily for religious purposes are permitted in all zoning districts, provided they comply with the Ordinance's provisions regarding height of structures, yard sizes, lot area, setbacks, open space and building coverage requirements." *(Majority Vote Required) – By Ballot - The Planning Board approves (7-0-0)*

**Yes: 103**    **No: 40**

**Article 10:** Shall the Town of Brookfield accept the provisions of RSA 53-G:1-RSA 53-G:11 providing for the establishment of a communications district, together with the municipalities of Albany, Bartlett, Chatham, Conway, Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Hales Location, Harts Location, Jackson, Madison, Moultonborough, Ossipee, Tamworth and Tuftonboro in accordance with the provisions of the proposed agreement filed with the Brookfield Governing Body. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: The article supports providing internet service to Brookfield. There is no associated cost to join the communications district but the collaboration with other municipalities will help leverage service. Steve Berry and Marshall Goldberg are the Brookfield representatives.*

Motion: Richard Zacher; Second: Brian Robisneau

**Article 10 passed by majority.**

**Article 11:** To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of **\$200,000** to repair the Town's roads; and if the amount of **\$200,000** is authorized to be withdrawn from the Road and Bridge Repair Capital Reserve Fund. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: Our Town roads require repairs that have not been feasible over the last few years due in part to COVID, costs, and the transition to a new road agent. The Selectmen will work with the Road Agent and residents to prioritize the work and seek bids on the work this Spring. Selectman Zacher explained that the withdraw of these funds will result in a fund balance of \$0. No money will go into the budget for this fund for next year, which means that the funding for next year will come from taxation. The fund will not be closed.*

Motion: Ed Comeau; Second: Ed Gauthier

**Article 11 passed unanimously.**

**Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$7,000** for the Property Re-Evaluation Capital Reserve Fund and said sum to be deposited into the Property Re-evaluation Capital Reserve Fund. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: This amount is for the next property revaluations in 2024, as required in New Hampshire every 5 years. The current amount in the fund is \$29,386.*

Motion: Richard Surette; Second Leah Gage

**Article 12 passed by majority.**

**Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the Cable and Internet Capital Reserve Fund created in 2019. Said funds and accumulated interest to date of withdrawal are to be transferred to the Town's general fund. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: The fund was initially created in anticipation of the Town's contribution to the cost to provide service to Brookfield – the current balance of approximately \$11,083 will be moved to the General Fund. Due to Breezeline's franchising the service from Wolfeboro, there was no cost include service to the Route 109 corridor. Harriet Wilson clarified that there are a few areas on Clark and Tumbledown Roads that will still not have service due to cost-prohibitive additional charges by providers to establish the connections.*

Motion: Richard Zacher; Second: Susan Wieske

**Article 13 passed unanimously.**

**Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$25,000** to be withdrawn from the Town House Capital Reserve Fund for the repair of the Town House windows and interior painting. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: For many reasons, including COVID, and the complexity of the renovations on a building listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, it has been difficult to secure contracts for the projects. The work excludes the schoolhouse portion of the building. The existing windows will be restored (not replaced) in-keeping with requirements for preservation by the U.S. Department of Interior. Painting estimates have been for less than \$5000.00 to complete the walls that are currently primed following recent plaster repairs. Stenciling is not included and will be a considered later at an additional cost..*

Motion: Ed Gauthier; Second Leah Gage

**Article 14 passed unanimously.**

**Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Selectmen's recommended sum of **\$1,231,078.00** for the Town Operating Budget. Said sum does not include special or individual articles addressed in this Warrant. *(Majority Vote Required). The Selectmen recommend this article.*

*Discussion: The Selectmen budget was completed with input at the public meeting January 30<sup>th</sup>. The Selectmen carefully considered costs and needs of the community to try to maintain a stagnant budget for 2023. Mark O'Brien inquired about the significant increase in the cost of Fire & Safety protection from Wakefield. Our expenses reflect the increase in capital revenue needed for equipment, salaries, and benefits for employed staff, rather than a volunteer fire department.*

*Frank Frazier proposed to amend budget line 4445.402 to be \$1600.00. The \$100.00 increase will be used to provide a donation to the Moose Mountain Regional Greenways organization (MMRG) on behalf of the Brookfield Conservation Commission and the citizens of Brookfield. The organization provides a lot of support for conservation of Town land and education to residents. Frank mentioned that in the past, the Town has donated \$500.*

*Motion to amend and seconded:*

**Amended Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **\$1,231,178.00** for the Town Operating Budget. Said sum does not include special or individual articles addressed in this Warrant. *(Majority vote required).*

Motion: Ed Gauthier; Second Terry Ward

**The amendment passed unanimously.**

**The amended Article 15 was then read and passed unanimously.**

**Other Business:**

Bob Servacek shared the significance of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Town House and welcomed residents to participate in the series of events planned for the year and to pick-up a brochure with the entire schedule, including special presentations, ice cream social, barbeque, and Christmas breakfast. He invited the voters to enjoy cake and coffee provided by the Heritage to kick-off the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the close of the meeting.

Frank Frazier described Brookfield's three significant watersheds and how Wakefield relies on water from Brookfield. He also described conservation areas in Brookfield and encouraged residents to consider volunteering to work with the Commission. Frank invited the Town to participate in Earth Day by joining Brookfield's annual clean-up day on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Harriet Wilson invited residents to also attend the first event of the Heritage Commission celebration on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. for a history of the Town House.

The Board of Selectman honored outgoing Selectman Chair Richard Surette with an engraved pewter plate in recognition of his 6 years of service on the Board of Selectmen.

**The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Karen E. Servacek  
Town Clerk