

**Board of Selectmen
Special Meeting
Monday, April 18, 2011**

Present: First Selectman Daniel Jerram, Selectman Bruce Gresczyk, New Hartford Resident/New Hartford Plus Reporter Maria Moore, Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

Absent: Selectman Thomas Klebart

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 8:12 AM.

Set time, date, manner of Annual Budget Meeting:

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Jerram, to reaffirm that the Annual Budget Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 7:00 PM in the Senior Center/Meeting Room of the New Hartford Town Hall.

Administrative Assistant Hayward noted that the Board of Selectmen had set this date at the last Board of Selectmen Meeting and that this action today was to confirm that date for publication purposes.

Unanimous.

Remove Item Number 1 from the Call of the Annual Budget Meeting:

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Jerram, in accordance with Section 7-7 of the CT General Statutes, to remove item number 1 from the call of the Annual Budget Meeting (to consider and act upon the budget as recommended by the Board of Finance for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011) and take such item to referendum.

First Selectman Jerram informed those present that he had conferred with Town Attorney Roraback via telephone regarding the procedure presently used with respect to the Annual Budget Meeting adjourning to a referendum. He asked if this was a legal procedure. Attorney Roraback had replied that an ordinance was adopted at a town meeting, which is the legislative body of the town; therefore the 'will of the people' prevailed; thus, in his opinion, the process is legal.

Selectman Gresczyk stated that he has heard conflicting opinions as to the legality of the ordinance and he, personally, does not believe that this is the 'right way to handle the budget process.' He noted that he feels it is a big expense to send the budget to referendum every year when only a few hundred people show up to vote.

Jerram stated that it is his belief that a referendum is ultimately fair as it allows for greater opportunity for residents to cast their vote on the budget. It is his belief that there are many meetings where residents can voice their concerns, state their opinions and lobby for change within a budget if they do not approve of the recommendations being made. Jerram also noted that according to the town attorney, only the bottom line of a budget can be changed at an annual budget meeting. The public cannot change line item allocations, they can only vote to amend the total proposed figure. Attorney Roraback did confirm that discussion of the budget may occur at the budget meeting in its present state, but reiterated that no action can be taken other than adjourning to referendum.

Unanimous.

Set time, date, manner of Budget Referendum:

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Jerram, to take such item (item number 1 that was removed from the call of the annual Budget Meeting) to a referendum to be held on Tuesday, May 3, 2011 between the hours of 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM using machine vote at the usual polling places.

Unanimous.

First Selectman Jerram noted, for the record, that he extended his thanks to the Board of Finance for the time they spent attending meetings, listening to presentations, and preparing a budget that is to be presented to the voters for approval. He also commended the Board of Education for their efforts and publicly recognized that they had their own challenges, especially considering the significant impact that special education costs continue to have on the budget.

MOTION: by Gresczyk, second Jerram to adjourn at 8:19 AM.

Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant