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Town of South Berwick Annual Warrant 2007

South Berwick, Me.

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TOWN OF SOUTH BERWICK
WARRANT
2007/2008

State of Maine

County of York, ss.

TO: Sidney Stevens, a Resident of South Berwick in the County of York, State of Maine.

GREETINGS:

In the name of the Town of South Berwick, you are required to notify the inhabitants of said Town, qualified to vote in Town affairs, to assemble at the R. P. Gagnon Assembly Hall at the Town Hall on Maine Street in said Town on Monday, the 4th day of June 2007, at 6:30 o'clock in the evening, then and there to act on the following articles:

ARTICLE 1. To elect a moderator to preside at said meeting.
Election to take place at 6:30pm. Business session will be held immediately following.

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will authorize the Town Council to dispose of tax acquired property in any manner in which the Town Council deems to be in the best interests of the Town.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to charge and collect interest at a rate of twelve (12) percent per annum on all unpaid taxes not paid by the due dates, with one-half of the taxes due on September 30, 2007 and one-half due on March 31, 2008.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to accept prepayment of taxes not yet due or assessed. Any excess paid in over the amount finally assessed shall be repaid at zero (0) percent interest.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to institute an eight (8) month payment plan known as the "Tax Club", with interest waived for all members of the Club making regular payments in accordance with the rules and regulations governing said Club.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to set the rate of interest paid on overpayment of taxes due to abatement at eight (8) percent per annum per 36MRS/506A.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from overlay the payment of property tax abatements (and applicable interest) granted during the fiscal year.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 8. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for General Government.

Town Council	\$ 11,050
Town Manager	144,048
Town Clerk	57,576
Control/Collection	192,055
Computer	42,675
Administration	177,588
Tax Assessment	90,230
Code Enforcement	55,689
Planning	87,846
Employee Benefits	704,835
Total	\$1,563,592

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation \$1,563,592

This article represents approximately \$1.21 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 9. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Water District Assessment/Fire Protection and Street Lights.

Water District Assessment/Fire Protection	\$ 299,735
Street Lights	39,000
Total	\$ 338,735

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation \$ 338,735

This article represents approximately \$.26 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 10. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Fire Department and Emergency Management.

Fire Department	\$ 167,308
Emergency Management	600
Total	\$ 167,908

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation \$ 167,908

This article represents approximately \$.13 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 11. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Emergency/Rescue Services.

Emergency/Rescue Services	\$ 91,653
Total	\$ 91,653

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 91,653
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This article represents approximately \$.07 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 12. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Police Services.

Police Department	\$ 624,073
Animal Control	11,799
Dispatch Center	245,114
Total	\$ 880,986

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 880,986
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This article represents approximately \$.68 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 13. To see what sum the Town will voted to raise and/or appropriate for Boards and Commissions.

Economic Development	\$ 5,000
Historic District Commission	250
Zoning Board of Appeals	160
Conservation Commission	4,850
Total	\$ 10,260

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 10,260
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This article represents approximately \$.01 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 14. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Public Works.

Highway	\$ 606,085
Town Garage	16,350
Transfer Station	339,807
Solid Waste Transportation	75,596
Total	\$1,074,838

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$1,074,838
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This article represents approximately \$.83 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 15. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Municipal Buildings.

Town Hall	\$ 69,832
Community Center	59,680
Total	\$ 129,512

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 129,512
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This article represents approximately \$.10 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 16. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Public Welfare.

Social Services	\$ 71,719
Social/Civic Contributions	6,600
Total	\$ 78,319

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 78,319
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This article represents approximately \$.06 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 17. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Recreation and the Library.

Recreation	\$ 67,296
Library	105,902
Total	\$ 173,198

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 173,198
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This article represents approximately \$.13 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 18. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Debt Service.

1989 CIP Debt	\$ 11,105
1991 CIP Debt	63,288
Community Center Debt	106,483
Total	\$ 180,876

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 180,876
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This article represents approximately \$.14 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 19. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Capital Improvements - Roads and Sidewalks.

Roads	\$ 439,000
Sidewalks	25,000
Total	\$ 464,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Appropriate from DOT Highway Block Grant and	\$ 77,088
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Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 386,912
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This article represents approximately \$.30 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 21. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Capital Improvements - Town Buildings.

Town Buildings Reserve	\$ 25,000
Library Building Reserve	50,000
Total	\$ 75,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 75,000
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This article represents approximately \$.06 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 22. To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and/or appropriate for Contingency Funding - Compensated Absence Reserve.

Compensated Absence Reserve	\$ 20,000
Total	\$ 20,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation	\$ 20,000
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This article represents approximately \$.01 of the total estimated tax rate.

ARTICLE 23. To see what sum the Town will vote to appropriate from Excise Taxes, Non-Tax General Fund Revenues, Revenue Sharing, Homestead Exemption Reimbursement, and Undesignated Fund Transfer to use toward the 2005/2006 Budget Appropriations, thereby decreasing the amount to be raised by taxation.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING APPROPRIATIONS:

Excise Taxes	\$1,179,500
Non-Tax General Fund Revenues	656,865
State Revenue Sharing/Revenue Sharing Residual	528,000
Homestead Exemption Reimbursement	110,000
Undesignated Fund Transfer	500,000
Total	\$2,974,365

ARTICLE 24. To see if the Town will vote to adjourn the Town Meeting.

Given under our hands in the Town of South Berwick, this 14th day of May 2007 A.D.

/s/
Suzanne Roberge

/s/
Norma R. Tutelian

/s/
Robert T. Gagne

/s/
Jean Demetracopoulos

/s/
Michelle Kareckas

STATE OF MAINE
RETURN

COUNTY OF YORK, SS

I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE NOTIFIED THE VOTERS OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH BERWICK OF THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET MEETING BY POSTING AN ATTESTED COPY OF THE WARRANT AT:

COMMUNITY CENTER
REO'S BARBERSHOP
SOUTH BERWICK LIBRARY
TOWN HALL
U.S. POST OFFICE

ALL CONSPICUOUS PLACES WITHIN SOUTH BERWICK, ON MAY 30, 2007.

/s/
Sidney Stevens, RESIDENT

ATTEST TO BE A TRUE COPY:


Barbara Bennett

**TOWN BUDGET MEETING
JUNE 4, 2007**

Pursuant to the foregoing warrant, the inhabitants of the Town of South Berwick, qualified to vote in Town affairs, assembled in the Town Hall on June 4, 2007 at 6:30pm and transacted the following business:

The meeting commenced with the presentation of our National & State Colors by representatives of the South Berwick Fire and Police Departments and the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ARTICLE 1: Thomas Harmon was nominated as moderator, received three votes of a total of three votes cast, was elected and duly sworn by the Town Clerk.

Mr. Harmon announced that the conduct of the meeting would be according to the Maine Moderators Manual, fifth edition, as written by the Maine Municipal Association.

Council members present included Chairman Suzanne Roberge, Robert T. Gagne, Michelle Kareckas, Norma Tutelian, and Jean Demetracopoulos. Town Manager Jeffrey A. Grossman was also present. Approximately 70 residents were present to vote.

ARTICLE 2: Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to authorize the Town Council to dispose of tax acquired property in any manner in which the Town Council deems to be in the best interests of the Town. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

Ruth Boston, Emery's Bridge Road, asked if there was a listing of properties available. Mrs. Demetracopoulos explained there are only two properties, located in Agamenticus Estates, planned to be sold.

Richard Clough, Academy Street, asked if the properties in Agamenticus estates were tax acquired. Mr. Grossman explained that they are not. And added that this article only pertains to properties foreclosed on for taxes.

Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 3: Michelle Kareckas made a motion to authorize the Tax Collector to charge and collect interest at a rate of twelve (12) percent per annum on all unpaid taxes not paid by the due dates, with one-half of the taxes due on September 30, 2007 and one-half due on March 31, 2008. Norma Tutelian seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 4: Norma Tutelian made a motion to authorize the Tax Collector to accept prepayment of taxes not yet due or assessed. Any excess paid in over the amount finally assessed shall be repaid at zero (0) percent interest. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 5: Robert Gagne made a motion to authorize the Tax Collector to institute an eight (8) month payment plan known as the "Tax Club", with interest waived for all members of the Club making regular payments in accordance with the rules and regulations governing said Club. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 6: Michelle Kareckas made a motion to set the rate of interest paid on overpayment of taxes due to abatement at eight (8) percent per annum as per 36MRSA §506A. Norma Tutelian seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 7: Norma Tutelian made a motion to appropriate from overlay the payment of property tax abatements (and applicable interest) granted during this fiscal year. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

Richard Clough, Academy Street, asked if this was a new article or if it took the place of the reserve for abatements. Mr. Grossman stated that at the recommendation of the Maine Municipal Association this article was added to clarify that any abatements granted would come from the overlay.

Motion passed unanimously.

Council Chair Suzanne Roberge gave a brief overview. The proposed budget of \$5,348,877 for 07/08 represents a 2.3% increase over last year. The proposed budget includes contracted cleaning at the Town Hall (replacing a part-time janitor), a longevity plan for non-union full-time employees with over 10 years of service, replacement of the police dispatch console, and a contribution to the Youth Center. Revenues have decreased by 2%. It is estimated that the proposed municipal budget will result in a tax rate increase of 26 cents. Ms. Roberge added that, although they are not included in the budget, the county assessment has increased by \$21,950 (7.2%) and our portion of the school budget is estimated to increase by \$669,670 (14%). The use of \$500,000 of the undesignated fund will help to offset some of the budget, leaving the balance of the undesignated fund at \$1.1 million.

ARTICLE 8:

Suzanne Roberge made a motion to raise and appropriate \$1,563,592 from general taxation for General Government. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

John Rudolph, Oldfields Road, questioned where the funds for expenses incurred regarding contract zoning, the industrial zone, and BT zones came from. Ms. Roberge stated that most came from the administration budget for professional services and some came from planning. Money for the industrial park was appropriated from the undesignated fund as voted on by the Council. She added that unexpected attorney's fees were expended due to several law suits. Mr. Rudolph asked for a comparison of this year's expenditures vs. those being proposed for 07/08. Ms. Roberge stated that the figures aren't available for the meeting. She added that \$35,000 was budgeted for 07/08 in anticipation of a number of hearings in the upcoming year including the comprehensive plan and revisiting the BT zones.

John Rudolph made a motion to amend article 8 by decreasing the amount by \$35,000, for a total of \$1,528,592. Raymond Demers seconded the motion.

John Rudolph stated that he made the motion because he feels that tax money has been wasted in pursuit of ill advised & not well thought out zoning changes; and to send a message to the Council and Manager.

Richard Clough, Academy Street, recommended defeating the amendment. He cautioned against lowering an amount that would cover attorney fees. He added that the Town could be put in a dangerous position if any lawsuits are filed.

Albert Roberge, Butler Street, made a motion to call the vote. Douglas Letellier, Agamenticus Road, seconded the motion. The motion to call the vote failed for lack of a 2/3 majority.

John Rudolph stated that he feels Mr. Clough is wrong. Decreasing the article doesn't mean there would be no funds for attorney's fees. It means the Manager would have to re-work that part of the budget.

The amendment to decrease article 8 by \$35,000 was voted on and failed with 20 in favor and 41 opposed.

Robert Eger, Warren Pond Road, questioned the 48% increase in the General Government line since 2005. Ms. Roberge explained that there were two full-time positions added, the planner and assessing agent, the Manager's assistant went from part to full-time, pay increases, and insurance costs. Fern Houliars, Accountant, added that there has been a redistribution of warrant items; the article now includes the multi-peril insurance for \$57,000.

The original motion to adopt article 8 as read was voted on and passed.

ARTICLE 9:

Norma Tutelian made a motion to raise and appropriate \$338,735 from general taxation for Water District Assessment/Fire Protection and Street Lights. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 10:

Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to raise and appropriate \$167,908 from general taxation for the Fire Department and Emergency Management. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

- ARTICLE 11:** Michelle Kareckas made a motion to raise and appropriate \$91,653 from general taxation for Emergency/Rescue Services. Suzanne Roberge seconded the motion.
- John Rudolph asked what the difference was between Emergency Rescue Services and Emergency Management. Mrs. Kareckas explained that Emergency Rescue Services is the ambulance. Emergency Management provides for emergency situations such as last year's Mother's Day storm and this year's Patriot's Day storm. The budget covers things like food and other necessities purchased for storm and flood victims.
- Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 12:** Robert Gagne made a motion to raise and appropriate \$880,986 from general taxation for Police Services. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 13:** Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to raise and appropriate \$10,260 from general taxation for Boards and Commissions. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 14:** Suzanne Roberge made a motion to raise and appropriate \$1,074,838 from general taxation for Public Works. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 15:** Michelle Kareckas made a motion to raise and appropriate \$129,512 from general taxation for Municipal Buildings. Suzanne Roberge seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 16:** Norma Tutelian made a motion to raise and appropriate \$78,319 from general taxation for Public Welfare. Michelle Kareckas seconded the motion.
- John Rudolph, Oldfields Road, asked for an explanation of the difference between the amounts requested by agencies \$29,430 and the amount requested by the Council \$6,600. Mr. Grossman explained that the \$29,430 was the total amount actually requested by outside agencies & groups. The \$6,600 is what the Council is recommending. Mr. Rudolph also asked about the \$15,000 requested by the South Berwick Cemetery Association. Mr. Grossman explained that the Association requested funding to aid with cemetery maintenance. Due to the cap imposed by LD1, it was felt that the Town would not be able to fund this request. Ms. Roberge added that the Council has been working with the Cemetery Association.
- Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 17:** Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to raise and appropriate \$173,198 from general taxation for Recreation and the Library. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed, 1 opposed.
- ARTICLE 18:** Michelle Kareckas made a motion to raise and appropriate \$180,876 from general taxation for Debt Service. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 19:** Robert Gagne made a motion to appropriate \$77,088 from DOT Highway Block Grant and raise and appropriate \$386,912 from general taxation, for a total of \$464,000, for Capital Improvements – Roads and Sidewalks. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- ARTICLE 20:** Robert Gagne made a motion to raise and appropriate \$100,000 from general taxation for Capital Improvements – Equipment. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.
- No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 21: Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to raise and appropriate \$75,000 from general taxation for Capital Improvements – Town Buildings. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

No discussions. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 22: Suzanne Roberge made a motion to raise and appropriate \$20,000 from general taxation for Contingency Funding – Compensated Absence Reserve. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 23: Suzanne Roberge made a motion to appropriate \$1,179,500 from Excise Taxes, \$656,865 from Non-Tax General Fund Revenues, \$528,000 from State Revenue Sharing/Revenue Sharing Residual, \$110,000 Homestead Exemption Reimbursement, and \$500,000 from Undesignated Fund Transfer, for a total of \$2,974,365, to use toward the 2007/2008 Budget Appropriations, thereby decreasing the amount to be raised by taxation. Robert Gagne seconded the motion.

Jack Kareckas, Parent Street, asked if the Town surplus of \$1.1 million included the \$500,000 being used from the undesignated fund toward the budget. Ms. Roberge explained that the Town's surplus (or undesignated fund) balance after using the \$500,000 would be \$1.1 million. Mr. Kareckas asked what percent of the budget the surplus represents. Mr. Grossman stated that it is approximately 20% of the municipal budget.

David Burke, Knight's Pond Road, asked why the increase from \$450,000 to \$500,000. Mr. Grossman stated that last year was also \$500,000. He added that the amount is higher than some previous years to avoid asking for an override of the LD1 cap.

Motion passed, 1 opposed.

ARTICLE 24: On a motion by Robert Gagne, seconded by Suzanne Roberge, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm.

Attest:


Barbara Bennett