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Town of South Berwick Annual Warrant 2015

South Berwick, Me.

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**TOWN OF SOUTH BERWICK
WARRANT
2015/2016**

State of Maine

County of York, ss.

TO: Joseph Rousselle, 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 in the R.P.Gagnon Assembly Hall at the Town Hall on Main Street in said Town on Tuesday, the 19th of May 2015, at 6:00 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 6:30 p.m.
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 seven (7) percent per annum on all unpaid taxes not paid by the due dates, with one-half of the taxes due on September 30, 2015 and one-half due on March 31, 2016.
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 continue 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 three (3) percent per annum as per MRSA36/506A.
TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Undesignated Fund the payment of property tax abatements (and applicable interest) granted during this fiscal year.
TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Police Services:

Police Department	\$ 809,338
Animal Control	8,584
Dispatch Center	336,636
Total	\$1,154,558

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation
and other revenue sources \$1,154,558

ARTICLE 9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Emergency Services:

Fire Department	\$ 190,776
Emergency Management Services	6,044
Water Assessment/Fire Protection	299,735
Total	\$ 496,555

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation
and other revenue sources \$ 496,555

ARTICLE 10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Public Works:

Town Hall	\$ 73,556
Community Center	73,978
Highway	754,766
Public Facilities	44,075
Town Garage	19,565
Transfer Station	291,909
Solid Waste Transportation	89,710
Total	\$ 1,347,559

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:
Raise and appropriate from general taxation
and other revenue sources \$ 1,347,559

ARTICLE 11. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance and Department of Transportation Highway Block Grant funds and raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources the following amounts for Capital Improvements – Roads:

Roads	\$ 600,000
Total	\$ 600,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Appropriate from DOT Highway Block Grant and	\$ 64,440
Appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance and	\$ 517,775
Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 17,785

ARTICLE 12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for General Government:

Town Council	\$ 6,050
Town Manager	148,303
Control/Collection	212,179
Computer	40,100
Administration	149,620
Tax Assessment	101,769
Employee Benefits	1,024,600
Street Lights	49,000
Compensated Absence Reserve	30,000
Total	\$ 1,761,621

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 1,761,621
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ARTICLE 13. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from AVESTA Land Sale (Bond Offset) and raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources the following amounts for Debt Service:

Community Center Debt	\$ 70,603
Young Street Debt	42,527
2010 CIP Debt	54,788
Library Construction Debt	142,500
Total	\$ 310,418

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Appropriate from AVESTA Land Sale (Bond Offset) and	\$ 34,220
Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 276,198

ARTICLE 14. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amount for the Records Department:

Town Clerk	\$ 67,097
Total	\$ 67,097

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 67,097
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ARTICLE 15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Code Enforcement and Health Departments:

Code Enforcement	\$ 53,845
Planning	36,360
Historic District Commission	250
Zoning Board of Appeals	160
Total	\$ 90,615

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 90,615
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ARTICLE 16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Public Welfare:

Social Services	\$ 63,971
Social/Civic Contributions	10,325
Emergency/Rescue Services	81,986
Total	\$ 156,282

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 156,282
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ARTICLE 17. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Recreation/Parks and Conservation:

Recreation	\$ 77,459
Conservation Commission	4,845
Total	\$ 82,304

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 82,304
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ARTICLE 18. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amount for the Library.

Library	\$ 127,384
Total	\$ 127,384

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 127,384
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ARTICLE 19. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the following amounts for Capital Improvements - Reserves:

Highway Equipment	\$ 100,000
Office Equipment	16,000
Fire Equipment	70,000
Police Equipment	40,000
Transfer Station	10,000
Town Buildings Reserve	15,000
Police Station Reserve	20,000
Total	\$ 271,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources	\$ 271,000
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ARTICLE 20. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance the following amount for Capital Improvements - Special Projects: Railroad Ave Parking Lot:

Special Projects: Railroad Ave Parking Lot	\$ 100,000
Total	\$ 100,000

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance	\$ 100,000
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ARTICLE 21. To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance and Capital Improvements - Shorey Bridge Project the following amounts for Capital Improvements - Special Projects: Route 236/Academy St/Vine St match:

Special Projects: Route 236/Academy St/ Vine St Match	\$ 57,100
Total	\$ 57,100

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS:

Appropriate from Undesignated Fund Balance:	\$ 22,225
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and

Appropriate from Capital Improvements - Shorey Bridge Project	\$ 34,875
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ARTICLE 22. To see if the Town will vote to apply the following amounts from Excise Taxes, Non-Tax General Fund Revenues, Revenue Sharing, BETE Reimbursement and Homestead Exemption Reimbursement to use toward the 2015/2016 Budget Appropriations, thereby decreasing the amount to be raised by taxation.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS:

Excise Taxes	\$ 1,104,800
Non-Tax General Fund Revenues	742,935
State Revenue Sharing	362,380
Homestead Exemption Reimbursement	150,000
BETE Reimbursement	12,000
Total	\$ 2,372,115

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

ARTICLE 23. To see if the Town will vote to increase the property tax levy limit of \$ 3,481,060 established for the Town of South Berwick by State law in the event that the municipal budget approved under the preceding articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit.

TOWN COUNCIL RECOMMENDS: Adoption

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 21st day of April 2015 A.D.

s/
John C. Kareckas

s/
Jean Demetracopoulos

Russell H Abell (not present)

s/
John J. James

s/
Laura S. Leber

Attested copies of this warrant were posted by resident Joseph Rousselle on Friday, May 8, 2015 at the Town Hall, Community Center, Library, Reo's Barbershop, and US Post Office.

Attest to be a true copy of the actual warrant and return:


Barbara Bennett, CCM

**TOWN OF SOUTH BERWICK
TOWN MEETING
MAY 19, 2015**

Pursuant to the foregoing warrant, the inhabitants of the Town of South Berwick, qualified to vote in Town affairs, assembled at the Town Hall on May 19, 2015 and transacted the following business. The meeting was called to order by the Clerk at 6:30pm.

Council members present included Jean Demetracopoulos, Russell H. Abell, John J. James, and Laura S. Leber. Town Manager Perry A. Ellsworth was also in attendance. There were 40 voters present. Council Chair John C. Kareckas arrived at 6:40pm.

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

Prior to the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Harmon made note of former Town Manager Richard Brown's passing and asked for a moment of silence. Mr. Harmon stated the meeting would be conducted in accordance with the 2005 edition of the Maine Moderators' Manual. He explained the process and the methods of voting.

ARTICLE 2: On a motion by John James, seconded by Russ Abell, it was unanimously voted 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.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 3: On a motion by Russ Abell, seconded by Laura Leber, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Tax Collector to charge and collect interest at a rate of seven (7) percent per annum on all unpaid taxes not paid by the due dates, with one-half of the taxes due September 30, 2015 and one-half due on March 31, 2016.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 4: On a motion by Laura Leber, seconded by Jean Demetracopoulos, it was unanimously voted 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.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 5: On a motion by Jean Demetracopoulos, seconded by John James, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Tax Collector to continue 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.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 6: On a motion by John James, seconded by Russ Abell, it was unanimously voted to set the rate of interest paid on overpayment of taxes due to abatement at three (3) percent per annum as per MRSA 36 §506A.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 7: On a motion by Russ Abell, seconded by Laura Leber, it was unanimously voted to appropriate from the Undesignated Fund the payment of property tax abatements (and applicable interest) granted during this fiscal year.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 8: Laura Leber made a motion to raise and appropriate \$1,154,558 for Police Services. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.

-Town Manager Ellsworth stated that this budget includes the addition of a new patrol officer. He added that due to current contract negotiations, this budget does not include salary and benefit increases for police or dispatch.

-Darnell Cox, Butler St, commented that there is too long of a delay when you dial 911. Mr. Ellsworth responded that our 911 calls go to York dispatch first and they relay them back to us. York is the local PSAP (Public Service Access Point). Mr. Ellsworth made note that there are a number of towns in discussions regarding dispatch services.

-Richard Clough, Academy St, asked if South Berwick could be a PSAP if others already exist. Mr. Ellsworth stated that an existing PSAP would have to close because of the State's limitations on the number allowed. Mr. Clough also asked if there are funds in the budget for body cameras. Mr. Ellsworth stated "not at this time", but costs are being looked at.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 9: Russ Abell made a motion to raise and appropriate \$496,555 for Emergency Services. John James seconded the motion.

Town Manager Ellsworth thanked all of the volunteers. There are many towns that can't fill their ranks and South Berwick often has a waiting list.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 10: Laura Leber made a motion to raise and appropriate \$1,347,559 for Public Works. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 11: Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to appropriate \$64,440 from the Department of Transportation Highway Block Grant funds, to appropriate \$517,775 from Undesignated Fund balance, and to raise and appropriate from general taxation and other revenue sources \$17,785, for a total of \$600,000 for Capital Improvements – Roads. John James seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 12: John James made a motion to raise and appropriate \$1,761,621 from general taxation and other revenue sources for General Government. John Kareckas seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 13: John Kareckas made a motion to appropriate \$34,220 from the Avesta Land Sale (Bond Offset) and raise and appropriate \$276,198 from general taxation and other revenue sources, for a total of \$310,418 for Debt Service. Russ Abell seconded the motion.

-Richard Clough, Academy St, asked if this would be the last payment on the Community Center debt. Yes. He also asked what the expected tax revenue from the Avesta property will be. Manager Ellsworth stated it should be about \$22,000-\$24,000. It was also explained that the \$34,220 from the sale to Avesta is being used in equal installments over the next four years to reduce the library debt faster.

-Paul Steinhauer, Hill Dr, asked how long was left on the library debt. The Young Street purchase bond matures in 2028 and the library construction bond matures in 2026.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 14: Russ Abell made a motion to raise and appropriate \$67,097 for the Records Department. Laura Leber seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 15: Laura Leber made a motion to raise and appropriate \$90,615 from general taxation and other revenue sources for Code Enforcement and Health Departments. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 16: Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to raise and appropriate \$156,282 from general taxation and other revenue sources for Public Welfare. John James seconded the motion.

-Town Manager Ellsworth commented that the part-time Assistance Director is averaging 8hr/wk and doing well. The Workfare Program has also been a plus. Mr. Ellsworth also made note that the cost for emergency rescue services has been locked in for several years.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 17: John James made a motion to raise and appropriate \$82,304 from general taxation and other revenue sources for Recreation/Parks and Conservation. John Kareckas seconded the motion.

No discussion. The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 18: John Kareckas made a motion to raise and appropriate \$127,384 from general taxation and other revenue sources for the Library. Russ Abell seconded the motion.

-Cliff Cleary, Spillane's Hill, commended the Council for the addition of the solar panels at the library. Manager Ellsworth explained that we were able to pay for the panels through the use of the Seacoast Initiative Grant money.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 19: Russ Abell made a motion to raise and appropriate \$271,000 from general taxation and other revenue sources for Capital Improvements – Reserves. Laura Leber seconded the motion.

-Town Manager Ellsworth explained that to reduce supply and maintenance costs the Town will be purchasing 4 new trucks this upcoming year.

-Audrey Fortier, Rodier Rd, asked about the Shorey's Bridge project. Mr. Ellsworth stated that we had budgeted \$200,000 for the project, but only spent \$130,000. The remaining funds will be dealt with an upcoming Article (#21). It was a joint project with Eliot; and it went so well we have been told that we will be receiving an award for the joint effort.

-Richard Clough, Academy St, commended the Council for thinking ahead and replacing the highway trucks. He also asked about the funds being budgeted for police station reserve. Mr. Kareckas responded that we are in the early stages of exploring the options.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 20: Laura Leber made a motion to appropriate \$100,000 from the Undesignated Fund for Capital Improvements to build a parking lot on Railroad Avenue. Jean Demetracopoulos seconded the motion.

-Darnell Cox, Butler St, commented that we should save the money and not develop the lot on Railroad Ave. for parking. It was explained that the Parking Committee has been researching the various parking issues in the downtown and the high demand for overnight parking, especially in the winter. As the lot exists now, and due to how people park, there is only room for about 50 cars. If it is paved and properly striped we should get about 120 spaces.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 21: Jean Demetracopoulos made a motion to appropriate \$22,225 from the Undesignated Fund and to appropriate \$34,875 from Capital Improvements-Shorey Bridge Project, for a total of \$57,100 to cover the Town's match of the Route 236/Academy St/Vine St intersection project. John James seconded the motion.

-Richard Clough, Academy St, received confirmation that the work has been put off until 2016.

-Cliff Cleary, Spillane's Hill, questioned whether there was a real need to move the intersection. Mr. Kareckas stated that safety concerns are the major issue.

-Richard Clough asked if the state will be paying for damage caused to other roads during the project. Mr. Kareckas stated that a traffic control plan has not been reviewed; nothing indicates that there will be designated detours. It is a concern and will be monitored.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 22: John James made a motion to apply \$1,104,800 from Excise Taxes, \$742,935 from Non-Tax General Fund Revenues, \$362,380 from State Revenue Sharing, \$150,000 from Homestead Exemption Reimbursement, and \$12,000 from BETE Reimbursement, for a total of \$2,372,115, toward the 2015/2016 budget appropriations, thereby decreasing the amount to be raised by taxation. John Kareckas seconded the motion.

-Richard Clough, Academy St, thanked the Council and Manager for keeping the budget under the LD1 cap.

-John Kareckas made note that the Governor's budget policies have been eroding the amount of revenue sharing over the last several years to a point that South Berwick should be receiving over \$900,000 each year and is down to \$362,380. He added that revenue sharing has a significant impact on property taxes and encouraged everyone to contact their representatives.

The article passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 23: Mr. Harmon explained that because the preceding articles had all been adopted as written the budget would not exceed the LD1 Tax Levy Limit making the article unnecessary. [The budget is \$4,217 under the limit] He asked that the motion be made, seconded, and defeated.

John Kareckas made a motion to increase the property tax levy limit of \$3,481,060 established for the Town of South Berwick by State law in the event that the municipal budget approved under the preceding articles will result in a tax commitment that is greater than that property tax levy limit. Russ Abell seconded the motion.

The article failed unanimously.

ARTICLE 24: On a motion by Richard Clough, seconded by Russ Abell, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm.

Attest:


Barbara Bennett, CCM