

2016 VOTERS GUIDE

Bring to the Deliberative Session Jan 30, 2016

1 PM – Ashland School Gymnasium

To the inhabitants of the Town of Ashland, in the County of Grafton in said State, qualified to vote in Town Affairs:

First Session – You are hereby notified to meet for the First (Deliberative) Session of the Annual Town Meeting, to be held at the William J. Tirone Gymnasium, 27 Highland Street, Ashland, New Hampshire, on **the 30st day of January 2016**, being Saturday at 1:00 pm. The First (Deliberative) Session will consist of explanation, discussion and debate of each of the following articles and will afford those voters who are present the opportunity to propose, debate and adopt amendments to each warrant article, except those articles whose wording is prescribed by state law.

Second Session – You are also notified to meet for the Second Session of the Annual Town Meeting, to elect Town Officers by official ballot and to vote by official ballot on the warrant articles as they may have been amended at the First Session, to be held at the William J. Tirone Gymnasium, 27 Highland Street, Ashland, New Hampshire on **the 8th day of March 2016**, being Tuesday, the polls to be open at 8:00 am and may not close prior to 7:00 pm to act upon the following:

On March 8, 2016 when you come to vote you will be given 4 ballots – (1) Town of Ashland Election of Officers and Warrant Articles; (2) Zoning Ballot with two questions; (3) Ashland School District Ballot; (4) Pemi-Baker Regional School District Ballot.

The following articles are what will appear on the TOWN OF ASHLAND ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND WARRANT ARTICLE BALLOT. We have given an explanation for these articles, not including the petitioned articles, so that you can become more aware of the intention of the article. Please feel free to bring forward any follow up questions so that you fully understand what you will be voting on.

The list of those running for the offices list below will not be available until January 30.

ARTICLE 1- ELECTION OF OFFICERS

To choose all of the following officers for the year ensuing:

Board of Selectmen-3 year term-1 position
Town Moderator – 2 year term – 1 position
Town Trustee of the Trust Funds-3 year term – 1 position
Library Trustee-3 year term – 1 position
Supervisor of the Checklist – 6 year term – 1 position
Electric Commissioner-3 year term – 1 position
Water and Sewer Commissioner-3 year term - 1 position
Budget Committee-3 year term-3 positions
Cemetery Trustee-3 year term - 1 position

Article 2 [Separate Zoning Ballot]

Question 1 - Are you in favor of an amendment as proposed by the Planning Board to the existing Zoning Ordinance, Section 2.3c, entitled, "Land and Space Requirements" as follows?

[The amendment is indicated with strike out of existing, change in **bold characters**:]

2.3c Lot Size and Frontage; Building Setback and Coverage. Lots and buildings shall conform to the following standards:

Zone	Min Lot Size Sq Ft	Min Lot Frontage Sq Ft (b)	Min. Bldg Set Back (d) (ft)	Min. Building Set Back (d) (ft)	Min. Building Set Back (d) (ft)	Max % of Lot Covered Building	Min % Lot Allotted to Green Space
			Front	Rear	Side		
Commercial w/s&w	None	100(c)	35 (e)	15 (e)	15 (e)		10% (g)
Commercial w/o	40,000 (a)	100 (c)	35 (e)	15 (e)	15 (e)		10% (g)
Industrial	40,000 (a)	150	35	25	25		10% (g)
Village Res w/s&w	15,000	100	35	15	15	35%	10% (g)
Village Res w/o	40,000 (a)	100	35	15	15	35%	
Rural Residential	40,000 (a)	100	35	25	25	30%	
Pemigewasset Overlay	2 acres	150	35 (f)	200 (f)	25 (f)		
Little Squam Overlay	2 acres	150	35 (d)	50 (d)	25 (d)		

- (a) Or as determined by the Soils and Slopes Table in 2.4
- (b) A lot owned in common as a recreation area serving nearby dwelling units is exempt from the minimum lot frontage requirement
- (c) Minimum lot frontage may be reduced where lot sizes of less than 40,000 square feet are permitted.
- (d) The minimum structure setback from Little Squam Lake shall be 50 feet.
- (e) A commercial building need not be set back more than the average of the front setback of commercial buildings on the lots to either side. If a vacant lot exists on one side, the minimum front setback shall be required. The minimum side and rear setbacks may be reduced to

conform with the side and rear setbacks of structures on adjoining properties at the discretion of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

- (f) The minimum structure setback from the Pemigewasset River shall be 200 feet. In the Industrial - Commercial Zone, the structure setback from the Pemigewasset River may be reduced to 50 feet, through a special exception granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- (g) All lots with three or more residential units in the Commercial and Village Residential zones shall provide for recreation or playground purposes, in addition to the minimum percentage for green space, 500 square feet plus an additional 100 square feet for each residential unit over three.

Explanation - In the last two lines of the table as it is currently written with references to the footnotes (d) and (f), all setbacks appear to be the same as the Rear. Footnotes (d) and (f) mention the Rear setback only from the waterbodies (Pemigewasset River or Little Squam Lake). Front and side setbacks are the same as required for the zone (without the overlay) in which the property is located.

Question 2 - Are you in favor of an amendment as proposed by the Planning Board to the existing Zoning Ordinance, Section 2.2a, entitled, Zone Regulations, Commercial as follows?

[The language change is in *italic characters*:]

2.2 Zone Regulations

2.2a Commercial: The purpose of this zone shall be primarily for retail and service type shopping facilities, facilities, offices, and banking facilities. The area shall provide access parking, adequate lighting, good design, and similar related items for convenience and safety. The following uses are permitted:

- Stores and shops for the conduct of any wholesale or retail business
- Offices, banks, personal services, and medical facilities
- Auto service stations and garages
- Theaters, halls and clubs
- Lodging facilities, hotels, motels and restaurants
- Residential uses including apartments ***only on second floor or above***
- Accessory uses
- Personal storage units
- Communication Towers
- ***Current commercial retail/office spaces on the ground/first floor level of buildings directly on Main Street from Winter Street to Mill Street (known as the business district in the Commercial Zone), cannot be converted to a residential unit.***

Explanation - The intent of this amendment to Section 2.2a is to restrict residential uses in the Commercial Zone specifically on Main Street from Winter Street to Mill Street; the effect of which is to preserve the historic commercial character of the Village's downtown consistent with the Master Plan. Ground/first floor level residential uses are inconsistent with the goal of preserving the downtown character. Residential uses will continue to be an allowed use on the second floor and above in buildings with ground floor storefronts.

ARTICLE 3 - Estimated Tax impact is \$.53 [offset by withdrawal from Capital Reserve Fund]
To see if the town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a five year lease / purchase agreement to obtain a new Fire Engine/Pumper which has a total purchase price of Four Hundred Eighty Five thousand one hundred sixty three Dollars (\$485,163) plus interest and to raise and appropriate the sum of One hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) for the down payment, which sum shall be funded by withdrawal from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund established in 2013. The annual lease payments to be paid in future years will be Seventy Nine Thousand and Seventy Eight Dollars (\$79,078). This lease/purchase agreement will not have an escape clause and is non-lapsing until December 31, 2021 (60% Majority vote required).

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0
Budget Committee recommends this article 6-3

Explanation – if this article were to pass the new purchase would replace the 1994 Smeal Fire Truck (known as Engine 2) due to its poor condition. The payments for this purchase will not begin until the 2017 budget cycle. The lease payment of \$79,078 will be part of the 2017-2021 budget cycles.

ARTICLE 4 Petitioned Article [received 12/22/15]

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eight hundred thousand dollars (\$800,000) for the purchase, renovation and furnishing of the former elementary school property (41 School Street) from Tri-County Community Action Program for the use of the Ashland Town Library, of which seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000) is for the purchase of the building and one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) is for the renovation and furnishing of the building, and to authorize the issuance of not more than seven hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$775,000) of bonds and notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Chapter 33) for that purpose; and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest there on; and to authorize the receipt and expenditure of any Federal, state or private funds that may become available for that purpose, and to authorize the withdrawal of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) from the Ashland Library Building Capital Reserve Fund for that purpose. (60% Majority vote required).

Board of Selectmen does not recommend this article 3-2
Budget Committee does not recommend this article 6-3

The following articles (5-8) are the budgets for the 2016 year. This format is different from years past. We previously included town government, electric department, water and sewer department budgets in one article. NOW we have separated them – Article 4 is the general operating budget which is paid for by the taxpayers; Article 5 is the electric department budget and is paid for by the rate payers; Article 6 and 7 are the water department and sewer department budgets which are paid for by the users.

ARTICLE 5 Estimated Tax impact is \$8.07

Shall the Town of Ashland raise and appropriate as the Town General Government operating budget not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling **\$2,593,844**. Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$2,609,353** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Ashland or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

ARTICLE 6

Shall the Town of Ashland raise and appropriate as the Ashland Electric Department operating budget not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling **\$3,162,531**. Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$3,162,531** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Ashland or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This budget is offset for by user fees.

ARTICLE 7

Shall the Town of Ashland raise and appropriate as the Ashland Water Department operating budget not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling **\$250,000**. Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$374,143** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Ashland or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This budget is offset for by user fees.

ARTICLE 8

Shall the Town of Ashland raise and appropriate as the Ashland Sewer Department operating budget not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling **\$390,000**. Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$1,199,212** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Ashland or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This budget is offset for by user fees.

ARTICLE 9 Estimated Tax Impact \$.05

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty Eight dollars [\$12,938] for the second year payment of the four year lease purchase of the Transfer Station mini loader as authorized by vote on March 10, 2015.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Explanation Article 9 – the voters of the Town leased this mini loader by vote in 2015 – this is the second payment for that lease. If this article were to fail the town would forfeit any money already paid and the equipment would have to be returned. For those of you that go to the transfer recycling facility you will notice this unit that is used by the facility operators. There would be additional costs to the town if the loader had to be returned. Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee

ARTICLE 10 Estimated Tax Impact \$.12

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Eight thousand One Hundred Eighty Nine Dollars [\$28,189] for the fourth year payment of the five year lease/purchase for the PWD Loader as authorized by vote on March 12, 2013.

Board of Selectmen recommend this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Explanation Article 10 – the voters of the Town leased the loader by vote in 2013 – this is the fourth payment for this lease. If this article were to fail the town would forfeit any money already paid and the equipment would have to be returned. This loader is the work horse of the public works department. There would be additional cost to the town if the loader had to be returned Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee.

ARTICLE 11 Estimated Tax impact is \$.53

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) to be placed into the Road Improvements Capital Reserve Fund established in 2012 for the purpose of repairing Roads.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 5-4

Explanation Article 11 – if passed these funds will be placed into the Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund that was established by vote of the town in 2012 to be used for future road projects. Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee.

ARTICLE 12 Estimated Tax impact is \$0.13

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) to be placed into the Police Department Capital Reserve Fund established in 2013 for the purpose of repairing or purchasing Police department vehicles.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Explanation Article 12 – if passed the funds would be placed into the Police Department Capital Reserve Fund established in 2013. Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee.

ARTICLE 13 Estimated Tax impact is \$0.21

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added into the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund established in 2013 for the purpose of repairing or purchasing fire department vehicles.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 7-2

Explanation Article 13– if passed the funds would be placed into the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee.

ARTICLE 14 Estimated Tax impact is \$0.15

To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 to be known as the Department of Public Works Fund for the purpose of vehicle or equipment purchase, replacement or repair and to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) to be added to the fund and to further appoint the Ashland Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the fund.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 4-1

Budget Committee recommends this article 5-4

Explanation Article 14– if passed this article would establish a new capital reserve fund to be known as the Department of Public Works Fund and would place \$35,000 into that fund for future needs of the department whether it be purchasing new vehicles or equipment or repairing/replacement of existing vehicles or equipment. Recommended by the Capital Improvement Plan Committee.

ARTICLE 15 Estimated Tax impact is \$0.11

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Town Building Maintenance and Repair fund established by town vote in March 2015.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 5-4

Explanation Article 15 –if passed this article would place \$25,000 into that fund for future needs of any town owned building. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) recommends building reserves for major repairs and maintenance of town buildings in order to reduce long-term expenses.

ARTICLE 16

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to establish or amend fees pursuant to RSA 41:9-a. This authority shall continue in effect until rescinded. If adopted, the Board of Selectmen, following a public hearing, may establish or amend fees or charges for the issuance of any license or permit which is part of a regulatory program, and/or for the use or occupancy of any public revenue-producing facility.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Explanation Article 16– The intent of giving the permission to the governing body (Board of Selectmen) is to be able to raise revenue if necessary. Once the Board has been given this authority, it may establish or amend fees for (a) the issuance of any license or permit which is part of a regulatory program established by vote of the town (such as building permit fees under a town – adopted zoning ordinance or building code), and (b) the use or occupancy of any public revenue-producing facility, the establishment of which has been authorized by vote of the town. BEFORE ESTABLISHING OR AMENDING FEES, THE BOARD MUST HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING WITH AT LEAST (7) DAYS’ PRIOR NOTICE WHICH SHALL INCLUDE THE PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF FEES.

ARTICLE 17

To see if the Town will adopt the provisions of RSA 261:153, VI to authorize the collection of an additional fee for motor vehicle registrations in the amount of \$5.00, to be deposited in a Capital Reserve Fund established by this vote to be known as the Ashland Municipal Transportation Fund, to be used for the purpose of municipal transportation improvements, to fund, wholly or in part, improvements in the local or regional transportation system, including roads, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, parking and intermodal facilities and public transportation; and further to designate the Selectmen as agents to expend from this fund. Registrations for motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles (as defined in RSA 215-A: 1, I-b) and antique motor vehicles (as defined in RSA 259:4) are exempt from this fee. This fee shall be collected starting with motor vehicle registration permits on or after May 1, 2016.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee does not recommend this article 5-4

Explanation Article 17 – if passed this would establish a new capital reserve fund known as the Ashland Municipal Transportation Fund and the amount to be placed into that fund would come from an additional \$5.00 fee charged when registering your vehicle. Many towns have adopted this RSA in order to capture a fee from all (not just property taxpayers) who used our roads. The fund would enable the town to have funds, albeit, a small amount, to be used for small projects.

Article 18

To see if the town will vote to authorize increasing the annual Edward Doggett Campground fees from \$2700 to \$2900 effective for the 2017 season.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 4-1

Explanation Article 18 – if passed this would increase revenues starting in 2017 for the town owned campground by \$4600.

Article 19 – Estimated Tax Impact \$0.00

To see if the town will vote to establish a capital reserve fund to be known as the Emergency Management Capital Reserve Fund and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars [\$1000] to be deposited into that fund and to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Explanation Article 19 – if passed this would establish a new capital reserve fund to be known as the Emergency Management Capital Reserve Fund and would place \$1000 into that fund to be used for purchase of supplies and/or equipment for emergency shelters.

Article 20

To see if the town will vote to ratify the Recycling and Use of Recycling/Transfer Center Ordinance originally adopted by the Board of Selectmen on December 5, 2005.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Explanation Article 20 – if passed this would ratify the existing ordinance which was adopted by the BOS in 2005. The ordinance must be adopted by the legislative body.

Article 21

To see if the town will vote to rescind the town's juvenile curfew ordinance [town ordinance #9] as its content is inconsistent with decided federal court cases.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Explanation Article 21 – if passed this would rescind an ordinance currently on the books which following legal review has been found to be inconsistent with federal

Article 22

To see if the Town will vote to amend the second paragraph of Ordinance #6 "Disorderly Actions" to read: "Pursuant to RSA 31:39, RSA 41:11 and RSA 41:11-a it is hereby ordained by the Town of Ashland, New Hampshire, as follows":

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Explanation Article 22 – if passed this would fix a technicality in how the ordinance reads by citing the correct referenced RSAs.

Article 23 Petitioned Article [received 11/12/15] Tax Impact \$0.01

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$2400) for the fiscal year 2015-2016 to support Voices Against Violence, a non-profit Crisis Center and shelter providing emergency shelter, court and hospital accompaniment and general support to women, men and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and stalking.

Board of Selectmen does not recommend this article 3-2

Budget Committee recommends this article 7-2

Article 24 Petitioned Article [received 12/22/15] Tax Impact \$0.11

Shall the Town vote, if the article for purchasing and renovating the former elementary school for the use of the Town Library fails, to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be placed into the "Ashland Library Building Fund" Capital Reserve Fund established in 2015 for the purpose of purchasing, building, and/or renovating a facility (including furnishing and equipment) for the Ashland Town Library.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 5-4

Article 25 Petitioned Article [received 12/18/15] Tax Impact \$0.00

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) for CADY (Communities for Alcohol-and drug-free Youth), a non –profit organization serving Ashland and nearby towns.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 7-2

Article 26 Petitioned Article [received 12/18/15] Tax Impact \$0.04

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Thousand Four Hundred Seventy-eight Dollars (\$9,478) for Pemi-Baker Community Health, a non-profit organization serving Ashland residents with home health care and hospice.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Article 27 Petitioned Article [received 12/30/15] Tax Impact \$.03

To see if the Town of Ashland will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Dollars (\$7,000) to support the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 9-0

Article 28 Petitioned Article [received 01/04/16] Tax Impact \$0.01

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1500.00) for the Day Away Program, a non-profit day center for those people having Dementia or a related form of Dementia whose purpose is to provide the caregiver a time of respite and help the “participant” to maintain their independence and encourage socialization.

Board of Selectmen does not recommend 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 8-1

Article 29 Petitioned Article [received 01/11/16] Tax Impact \$0.01

To see if the Town of Ashland will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand One Hundred and Seven Dollars (\$3,107) for Tri-County Community Action Grafton County for the purpose of continuing services of the Fuel Assistance Program for the residents of Ashland.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 8-1

Article 30 Petitioned Article [received 1/11/16] Tax Impact \$0.01

To see if the Town of Ashland will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$3,500) to support the Emergency Mental Health Services provided by Genesis Behavioral Health.

Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Budget Committee recommends this article 6-3