

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Reading Memorial High School

April 28, 2008

Town Clerk Cheryl Johnson sworn in elected Town Meeting members before their precinct meetings. Precinct 8 met and appointed Bruce A. MacKenzie to fill a vacated seat until the next local election. Precinct 2 tie votes were broken with Joseph T. Connearney, Sr. for a three year term. Precinct 3 tie votes were broken with Jeanne MacDonald Duran for a three year term.

The meeting was called to order by the Moderator, Alan E. Foulds, at 7:39 p.m., there being a quorum present. The Invocation was given by Anthony Rickley, Precinct 2 followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All newly elected and appointed Town Meeting Members were sworn in by the Moderator.

The Warrant was partially read by the Town Clerk, Cheryl A. Johnson, when on motion by James E. Bonazoli, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to dispense with further reading of the Warrant except for the Officer's Return, which was read by the Town Clerk.

Moderator informed Town Meeting that Troop 702 was at Town Meeting as part of their community service badge.

Moderator reminded Town Meeting Members about instruction motions. Technically State Law does not allow motions to be made when the subject matter does not first appear in the Warrant. They have traditionally been allowed here because they are completely "non-binding." Our bylaws stipulate that all Main Motions (which these are) must be made in writing. Additionally, I ask that they be written on an 8 ½ by 11 sheet, containing nothing but the motion. Otherwise they are likely to be lost. The Chair will enforce that rule tonight. In addition, I would ask that whenever practical all such motions be presented to the Moderator at the beginning of each night's session. At some convenient point the Chair will inform the body what intended Instructional motions have been presented. This is being done in fairness to those being "Instructed," and deserve some semblance of notice, and to Town Meeting Members who, when making a decision as to whether or not to adjourn for the evening, should know what business is still before them. Unlike all the regular articles, members have no idea what type of Instruction Motions will be made.

ARTICLE 2 – Chairman of the Board of Selectman James E. Bonazoli gave the following State of the Town Report:

I am proud to present to you the 2008 State of the Town report on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, and although they need no introductions I want to acknowledge the other members of the Board who have worked so hard and helped make this report possible – Vice Chairman Steve Goldy, Secretary Ben Tafoya, and Selectmen Camille Anthony and Rick Schubert.

As I prepared this and looked back on what has been accomplished within the last year since our last April Town meeting I found it very difficult to keep this short but I promise I will do my best to keep it within one night.

Reading is the envy of many surrounding communities due to the strong partnerships we foster both internally and externally. The excellent working relationship between Town government and the School Department, Facilities Department, and Reading Municipal Light Department are exemplary, and these relationships need to be recognized. Additionally, Reading enjoys an excellent relationship with State Senator Richard Tisei, State Representatives Brad Jones and Patrick Natale, and many departments of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including the Massachusetts Highway Department and the Department of Environmental Protection with whom we have worked a lot with lately. We also have excellent support and partnerships with our delegation in Congress, and I particularly want to mention Congressman John Tierney with whom we met recently on issues of concern to Reading.

Our community and its Town government continue to thrive. There is a level of positive activity and change probably unmatched in our history. We are truly a Community of Excellence. This is largely because of the people who have come together to serve their community - as paid staff and as volunteers. We are very fortunate to have such a strong base of dedicated, creative, and hard working employees at all levels – both school and town.

Even in the midst of major changes in personnel this past year we never skipped a beat. I would like to outline just a few of those changes. We had the retirement of our Health Administrator who worked for years in our community and helped create many of our policies and guild lines. We had turnover in our Public Nurse and Town Planner which if you consider how much development we had in town last year and then think how each of these positions play major roles in the progress and success of those projects it is astounding. The Town Manger and Department Heads are to be commended in assuring that these transitions have gone so smoothly.

I do want to thank each of those who have left Reading's service, and welcome those who have joined our official family this year.

As proud as I am of the staff and employees we have - it is our heart and soul – our volunteers that makes Reading Reading. Our employees' energy, creativity and hard work is equally match by our core of volunteers.

It is absolutely amazing what are community is willing and able to do. During 2007, Reading Town government:

- ◆ filled 237 volunteer positions,
- ◆ on 47 standing Town Boards, Committees and Commissions (not including Town Meeting),

- ◆ contributing to over 7000 volunteer hours per year (3.6 person years).
- ◆ each volunteer dedicates the equivalent of almost a week of full time work per year
- ◆ each Board, Committee, or Commission meets on average 30 hours per year – many meet much more.

Plus keep in mind that is 47 “standing” boards and committees – in addition, the Town has had several ad hoc groups dealing with topics such as Birch Meadow Park planning, Ipswich River Greenway planning, tax classification, and the Community Preservation Act. Add to this the tremendous number of volunteers on behalf of our schools, recreation programs, cultural offerings, etc, and this is truly a remarkable story.

I would love to name all our volunteers but that just isn’t possible in the time we have but there is one individual who does deserve mention, and that is the senior member of our volunteer corps – Ben Nichols. Ben moved from Reading last year after spending almost all of his 99 years as a resident and serving in many official and community volunteer positions in the community. As seen here Ben was honored with a going away party at the Senior Center in October of this past year, organized by our very own Bill Brown and staff.

For me Ben will always be the symbol of volunteerism and civic duty. He cared for the well being of Reading more than anyone I know. May all of us strive for such excellence and longevity in all we do for Reading.

Community Development

Much of Reading’s activity and success last year was in the area of Community Development:

The long awaited contract to construct the Downtown Improvement Project was awarded by the State in 2007 and if any of you have tried to go down Main St. you know work has begun. Although it will be a difficult process and perhaps a bit of a logistical headache at the end it will be well worth it. We ask for everyone’s patience and although it may not be as easy to get to them please make a concerted effort to patronize all our merchants.

Speaking of not easily accessible - The Downtown Parking Task Force conducted a survey which showed that there is a shortage of 280 spaces for employees, and a shortage of 120 customer spaces. The problem will only be compounded on a short term with the construction but in the long run with additional growth and new establishments moving in we may have a serious problem. To help address this concern the Town received a grant from the Commonwealth of MA in the amount of \$50,000 to proceed with a parking garage feasibility study which we hope to commence shortly. Additionally to address a very specific need - Town Meeting re-zoned a parcel of land on Sanborn Street for the Reading Cooperative Bank to construct employee parking which have freed more spaces for other merchants and patrons.

To date our plans for economic development have been centered on Walkers Brook Drive. Following on the success of the development of our former landfill, Dickinson Development decided they liked Reading so much, that they redeveloped the former Boston Stove property and the new Stop and Shop opened on that site this past year. The TASC building was purchased, and Hallmark Health occupies one wing of the building, while the new TASC building owner has been able to re-rent additional major portions of the 6 story office tower. Bertucci's and Longhorn Steakhouse restaurants have been constructed on the front portions of the site and if you have gone there you know how successful they have been. I was put on the waiting list at Longhorns Friday and I think my table will be ready tomorrow.

The former General Tire property is being redeveloped into a retail center, with major tenants consisting of the Baby Warehouse, Reading Athletic Center, and K&G clothing. Market Basket will soon open on the site, and there is room for additional retail development.

In 2007 Pearson selected National Development to partner with the Weiner Group to re-develop the Addison-Wesley/Pearson site. In August 2007 the Selectmen voted to approve submission of a Smart Growth 40R Application to the State. Re-zoning of the Addison Wesley/Pearson property for mixed use development, including a 40R development was approved by Town Meeting in December. Assuming the plans are built out this will be a major move in meeting our low-income housing needs.

On other fronts to promote economic development we had an outcry from the residents for an "early cup of coffee" which resulted in a change of the Town's Bylaws regarding hours of operation for retail businesses. The Selectmen adopted a policy regarding a waiver of the hours of operation to allow retail businesses to open before 6:00 a.m. To my surprise we have only had one applicant who was just recently approved after their first application to the Board of Selectmen was denied back in July.

Additionally in an effort to help revitalize the downtown area, the Board of Selectmen had several discussions around putting an Article on the 2008 Annual Town Meeting Warrant to allow restaurants with less than 100 seats to have an All Alcoholic Liquor License. This is Article 13 on the warrant for this Town Meeting.

These are just two examples of how the Board is looking to promote business within Reading. Much of the work and plan are coming from the Economic Development Committee.

Moving to conservation and recreation development in May 2007, the Board of Selectmen approved a purchase and sales agreement for the purchase of 1481 Main Street (*Mattera property*) with funding coming from a \$400,000 State grant and the generosity of Rita and Nelson Burbank who donated \$400,000. The property was purchased, and a dedication of the property was held last spring. Although we have seen some activity out of here we really hope this will become a hub for many recreation and conservation activities.

A Memorial Park Master Plan was developed and approved by the Board of Selectmen. Proposed improvements to the park included reshaping the ice rinks and adding lights to them, add bocce, horseshoes and volleyball, public parking along Harrison Street, additional shade trees and plantings, a handicapped accessible bucolic pathway through the park, and reconstruction of the tennis court and basketball court. The cost is estimated at \$740,000 and a Nelson and Rita Burbank donated funds for the majority of the work. Friends of Reading Recreation have been involved with this project's design and will contribute several elements to the project.

The ad hoc Northern Area Greenway Committee was charged with developing ways to improve public access to the Town owned lands along the northern area of Reading mostly along the Ipswich River. They developed a plan that includes a main route and an alternative route if the boardwalks do not come to fruition. They recommended benches and picnicking in the Town Forest area. The former Water Treatment Plant site is the headway and should have active recreation and kiosks. They recommended the construction of a boardwalk to connect the Town Forest to Mill Street, and a fishing pier at the Lobs Pound Mill site along with handicap accessibility. If you have ever been up in the Salisbury/Hampton NH area you know how beautiful and wonderful these trails could be.

After it was determined Imagination Station had to be dismantled we wanted to make sure a proper plan was put together. The ad hoc Birch Meadow Master Plan Committee was charged with developing a master plan for recreational use of the Birch Meadow area. A recent survey showed that residents of the Town would enjoy big open areas, desire to rebuild Imagination Station, and want more fields and a pool. This master plan will be the basis for town budget and planning as well as an avenue for contributions and donations.

One option to help fund these projects is the Community Preservation Act. An ad hoc Community Preservation Act Study Committee was put together and they recommended that the Selectmen place the Community Preservation Act on the Warrant for the Subsequent Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen decided to postpone this action until a later date.

Our new Nurse Advocacy Program under Elder Services is off to a very strong start. Our nurse, Dianne Luther was hired in September and has already worked with 50 Reading seniors. Dianne is dedicated to helping Reading seniors manage their health care needs and plan strategies for managing these needs both in the short term and future mostly in the seniors' very own homes. By providing education, counseling and advocacy, Dianne is helping seniors and their caregivers prevent falls, injuries and unnecessary disabilities. The program is working with fire & police as well as other community providers to assist seniors proactively. Information about the program will be available at the checkers table after our next town meeting.

The efforts at combating substance abuse in Reading lead to the formation of a non-profit group – Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA). This organization was formed in September 2006, and was the recipient of a \$10,000 planning grant. The 21 member board meets monthly and has made great strides in organizing to combat substance abuse. The Town applied for and was awarded a very competitive \$100,000 a year 5 year Drug Free Community grant which allows the Town to hire staff and move the RCASA agenda forward. Staff was hired in early 2008. We have already seen positive results in organizing the effort by having this staff member in place but as we all know, sadly, true success will be measured in months to years. Nonetheless this is a battle we can never stop fighting.

Infrastructure Improvements

The Route 128/I-93 Interchange Project completed its work and will be moving on to the Environmental Impact process. In May 2007, the Board of Selectmen approved a position paper on the Route 128/I-93 Interchange Project. It is far from over but at least one phase is closed.

MWRA – in the beginning we thought we would never get there but in October 2007, the Selectmen approved the Water Supply Continuation Agreement between the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and the Town of Reading with a term expiring June 30, 2016. The Town is now completely dependent on the MWRA for water supply and has suspended the use of the local water supply. It isn't often that one can say it, but Reading's action has saved a river. Now we just need to worry if we will have a set of dumb bells or whatever you see in the proposed water towers at the end of Main St.

We accomplished a tremendous amount of road reconstruction and resurfacing this past year. You have the list above but Peter do we know how many miles? Either way – we have miles more to do.

Granite curb and sidewalks were installed on all or parts of the following streets in 2007:

Franklin Street (Main Street to Grove Street – westerly side),
West Street (Enos Circle to Catherine Avenue – westerly side only).

Sidewalk construction has many benefits including reduction of vehicle travel, improvements to health, and connections of neighborhoods. Much more needs to be done in this area, and the Board of Selectmen is discussing the possibility of asking our voters to approve a multi-year program to expand our Walkable Reading initiatives.

Additional capital improvements were also authorized and work proceeded on:

School buildings
Town Buildings
Library furnishings
Public Works equipment

Playgrounds
downtown improvement
financial systems
fire engine
artificial turf field
Technology
fire ladder truck
Tennis courts

It's all worth it.

The Town's financial situation continues to be excellent, maintaining appropriate cash reserves and the ability to continue supplemental capital projects. This is due to consistent, sustainable, and conservative budgeting, and the establishment by the Finance Committee of sound financial policies and goals.

The ad hoc Tax Classification Task Force studied the notion of shifting the tax rate. The Task Force voted to recommend adopting a shift. After input from residents and business owners and much deliberation the Board of Selectmen voted to not shift the tax rate.

The Town's bond rating by Moody's was upgraded from A1 to Aa3, thanks to the hard work of the Town Accountant Gail LaPointe and Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Bob LeLacheur, and building on the previous strong financial base set by the retired Town Accountant Richard Foley and retired Finance Director Beth Klepeis.

But again as we see with snow and ice budget we just don't know what is ahead and we must continue consistent, sustainable, and conservative budgeting.

Don't get me wrong. I am not looking at the Town through rose colored glasses. I know we have many challenges ahead – many unknowns. The economy will continue to be our main concern with energy and gas prices rising – the unknown in health care and more and more need to help our neighbors young and old.

We know what additional things we need to do as a community – we are planning for that. Together – our local elected officials, our several Departments, our volunteers, our legislative leaders on a state and national level – we can and will accomplish more to benefit this entire community.

We know what excellence looks like. (*hockey team*)

It can be duplicated

... well maybe not duplicated in all cases

But certainly most (*Olympiads*)

By supporting each other, we can achieve what seems to be the impossible.

We have some of the best leadership (*Town Manager*) around to guild us (*School Superintendent*) through the challenges.

We have the financial thought leadership in Bob LeLacheur, Gail LaPointe, and Mary Delai and are financially stronger because of them and by this body and others being Cautiously Optimistic and conservative in our approach.

We will continue to find new ways to communicate and to share ideas (*World Café slide*). Where young and old can work together and help each other building a stronger community.

We have a solid foundation of the people who came before us (*Ben Nichols*) to build on and learn from. All of this is what makes the fabric of our town.

We know what we can do as a community – we have shown that – and it is amazing. So as you see it isn't a question of “what do want Reading to become” We have become it. The question is what are we doing as individuals, boards and committees today, tomorrow and the next day to ensure we continue to be a Community of Excellence?

We are off to a good start. By you sitting here tonight you are doing just that and I want to thank you for your support in the betterment of our community of Reading.

Thank you and Good night.

ARTICLE 2 – On motion by Stephen A. Goldy, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to table the subject matter of Article 2.

ARTICLE 3 – On motion by Ben Tafoya, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to table the subject matter of Article 3.

ARTICLE 4 – On motion by James E. Bonazoli, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to approve the following amendments to the FY 2008 – FY 2017 Capital Improvements Program provided for in Section 7-7 of the Reading Home Rule Charter and as previously amended:

- C2 – School Building Improvement – Add \$45,000 in FY 2008
- C8 – Public Safety – Fire – Move \$115,000 to replace turnout gear from FY 2009 to FY 2008
- C14 – Parks & Recreation – Move \$40,000 to replace the flag pole on the Common from FY 2009 to FY 2008

ARTICLE 5 – On motion by Camille W. Anthony, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to amend the following votes taken under Article 13 of the Warrant of the Annual Town Meeting of April 23, 2007, as amended by Article 4 of the November 13, 2007 Subsequent Town Meeting; and that the Town vote to appropriate by transfer sums from available funds as noted for the operation of the Town and its government:

General Fund – Wages and Expenses

<u>Account Line</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
B9	Benefits – Non-Contributory Retirement	\$18,000	
D3	Debt Service	\$47,000	
N17	Finance Expenses: School and Town >Phone redundancy - \$10,000 >Email backup - \$15,000		\$ 25,000
<u>Account Line</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
P1	Library Salaries – Extended Sick Leave		\$ 6,600
Q23	Community Services Expenses – >Veteran’s Assistance \$15,000 >Travel and Prof. Development - \$9,500		\$ 24,500
R7	Public Safety Salaries – Fire (OT)		\$ 15,000
R8	Public Safety Expenses – Police Academy		\$ 9,300
S14	Public Works Salaries – Vacant positions for portions of the year	\$60,000	
S15	Public Works Expenses >Highway Contractual \$40,000 >Highway Supplies \$60,000 >Patching \$4,000 >Road Project \$27,100		\$131,100
S16	Public Works – Street Lighting	\$10,000	
S17	Public Works – Rubbish Collection/ Disposal	\$50,000	
S18	Public Works Expenses – Snow & Ice		\$592,015
	Subtotals	\$185,000	\$803,515
	Net from Free Cash		\$618,515

General Fund – Capital

<u>Account Line</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
C2	School Building Improvements > Killam roof repairs		\$ 45,000
C8	Public Safety – Fire > Replace Firefighter turnout gear		\$115,000
C14	Parks and Recreation > Replace flag pole in Town Common		\$ 40,000
	Subtotals		\$ 200,000
	Net from Free Cash		\$ 200,000

Enterprise Funds

<u>Account Line</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
W5	Water Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries • Expenses • Debt Service • Prior year's capital 		\$137,000
		\$46,000	
		\$ 7,000	
		\$84,000	
	Subtotals	\$137,000	\$137,000
	Net from:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Reserves • Sewer Reserves • Storm Water Reserves) 		\$0
			\$0
			\$0

ARTICLE 6 – On motion by James E. Bonazoli, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to Indefinitely Postpone the subject matter of Article 6.

ARTICLE 7 – On motion by Stephen A. Goldy, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to approve the FY 2009 – FY 2018 Capital Improvements Program as provided for in Section 7-7 of the Reading Home Rule Charter.

ARTICLE 8 – On motion by Ben Tafoya, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Forty Five Thousand One Hundred and Twenty Two Dollars (\$445,122) for highway projects from the proceeds due to the Town under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 90.

2/3 vote required
Declared unanimous by Moderator

ARTICLE 9 – On motion by Richard W. Schubert, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell, or exchange, or dispose of, upon such terms and conditions as they may determine, the following items of Town tangible property:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Equipment</u>
Fire	Engine 3 1986 Pirsch Hahn Fire Engine Ladder 1 1991 E-One 110' aerial
DPW	1996 Chevrolet Dump Truck Three (3) 1997 Ford Pick-up Trucks 1993 Ford Sedan 1994 Caterpillar Loader 928F 1988 International Bucket Truck 1995 Holder Sidewalk Plow 1995 SKAG Lawnmower
Police	Two (2) Police Cruisers, two (2) Motorcycles

ARTICLE 10 – On motion by Camille W. Anthony, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to authorize revolving funds for certain Town departments under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007 with the receipts, as specified, credited to each fund, the purposes, as listed, for which each fund may be spent, the maximum amount that may be spent from each fund for the fiscal year and the disposition of the balance of each fund at fiscal year end.

Revolving Account	Spending Authority	Revenue Source	Allowed Expenses	Expenditure Limits	Year End Balance
Home Composting	Public Works Director	Fees charged for compost & recycle bins	Purchase of bins	\$1349	Available for expenditure next year
Conservation Commission Consulting Fees	Conservation Commission	Fees As provided for in Reading General Bylaws Section 5.7, Wetlands Protection	Consulting and engineering services for the review of designs and engineering work for the protection of wetlands.	\$25,000	Available for expenditure next year
Revolving Account	Spending Authority	Revenue Source	Allowed Expenses	Expenditure Limits	Year End Balance
Inspection Revolving Fund	Town Manager	Building Plumbing, Wiring, Gas and other permits for the Walkers Brook Crossing, Archstone and Johnson Woods developments	Legal, oversight and inspection, plan review, initial property appraisals and appeals, Community Services general management, landfill monitoring costs, curb sidewalks and pedestrian safety improvements, records archiving and other project related costs.	\$200,000	Available for expenditure next year
Public Health Clinics	Health Services Administrator	Clinic fees and third party reimbursements	Vaccines, materials for screening clinics and clinical supply costs, medical equipment and supplies, immunizations, educational materials	\$25,000	Available for expenditure next year

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town raise by borrowing, or from the tax levy, or transfer from available funds, and appropriate the sum of:

- \$83,530,015

for the operation of the Town and its Government for Fiscal Year 2009, beginning July 1, 2008.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item B99:

- Benefits \$10,885,903

to be provided as follows:

Line B99: \$151,667 from Overlay Surplus; and the remainder of line B99 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items C1 through C11:

- Capital \$650,800

to be provided as follows:

Lines C1 through C11 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item D99:

- Debt \$6,959,654

to be provided as follows:

\$350,000 of Line D99 from Sale of Real Estate; and the remainder of Line D99 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item H99:

- Vocational Education \$424,113

to be provided as follows:

Line H99 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items M1 and M2:

- Accounting _____ \$124,189

to be provided as follows:

Lines M1 and M2 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items N15 and N16:

- Finance _____ \$1,372,459

to be provided as follows:

Lines N15 and N16 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items P1 and P2:

- Library: _____ \$1,203,906

to be provided as follows:

Lines P1 and P2 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by William C. Brown, Precinct 8, it was moved to amend Line Item P1 by removing Sunday Hours in the amount of \$38,679.

Motion to amend did not carry.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items Q6 and Q7:

- Town Manager's Office _____ \$692,818

to be provided as follows:

Lines Q6 and Q7 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items R14 and R15:

- Community Services \$927,231

to be provided as follows:

Lines R14 and R15 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items S19 and S20, and S16, S17, and S18:

- Public Works: \$4,807,030

to be provided as follows:

\$120,000 of Line S12 from the Reading Ice Arena Authority; \$37,665 of Line S15 from Cemetery Sale of Lots; with the remainder of Lines S19 and S20, and S16, S17, and S18 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by William C. Brown, Precinct 8, it was moved to amend Line Item S17 by removing Curbside Leaf Collections in the amount of \$20,313.

Motion to amend did not carry.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Harvey (Pete) J. Dahl, Precinct 7, it was moved to amend Line Item P20 by increasing it by \$60,000 for road maintenance.

Motion to amend did not carry.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Items T7 and T8:

- Public Safety: \$7,622,882

to be provided as follows:

Lines T7 and T8 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item U99:

- School Department \$35,871,170

to be provided as follows:

\$75,000 of Line U99 from Free Cash; with the remainder of Line U99 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item V99:

- Town Building Maint. \$708,156

to be provided as follows:

Line V99 from property taxes, State aid and non-property tax local receipts.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item W5:

- Water Enterprise Fund \$5,348,472

to be provided as follows: \$350,000 from Water Fund Reserves, and the balance of Line W5 from user fees and other charges.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item X5:

- Sewer Enterprise Fund \$5,049,535

to be provided as follows: \$250,000 from Sewer Fund Reserves, and the balance of Line X5 from user fees and other charges.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was moved that the Town approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget as presented for Line Item Y5:

- Storm Water Enterprise Fund \$315,514

to be provided as follows:

Line Y5 from user fees and other charges.

ARTICLE 11 – On motion by Andrew Grimes, Chairman of the Finance Committee, it was voted to approve and appropriate the proposed FY 2009 Budget, exclusive of State and county assessments:

- \$83,530,015
- Representing the total of all motions made under Article 11 as amended
- Funds are to be provided as set forth in said motions as amended

2/3 vote required
Declared Unanimous by Moderator

The total budget figure of \$83,530,015 includes the State Assessment. Technically, Town Meeting does not vote on this figure - the actual totals of all of the lines items covered by the motions in Article 11 is \$82,963,832.

ARTICLE 12 – On motion by James E. Bonazoli, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to table the subject matter of Article 12.

ARTICLE 13 – On motion by Stephen A. Goldy, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted that the Board of Selectmen be authorized to file Home Rule Legislation that would place on a ballot at a subsequent election a question as to whether the Board of Selectmen would be authorized to issue licenses for the sale of all alcoholic beverages, to be drunk on the premises, to restaurants that have a seating capacity for less than one hundred persons, subject to rules and regulations to be established by the Board of Selectmen, provided that the Legislature may reasonably vary the form and substance of the requested legislation within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

**HOME RULE LEGISLATION/SEAT RESTRICTION ALL ALCOHOL
RESTAURANT LICENSE**

“An Act Reducing the Minimum Seating Capacity of Certain Restaurants in the Town of Reading.

Section 1. Notwithstanding section 11 of Chapter 138 of the General Laws, or any vote cast in the Town of Reading on Question 6 at the November 2, 1982 State Election, or any other special act or general law to the contrary, the Selectmen of the Town of Reading shall cause to be placed on the official ballot used in the Town of Reading by the registered voters thereof at the Annual Town Election to be held in the year 2009 the following question:

Shall the Board of Selectmen be granted the authority to issue licenses for the sale of all alcohol beverages to be consumed on the premises to restaurants with a seating capacity of less than one hundred persons?

Yes _____ No _____

Section 2. The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Reading is hereby authorized to and shall include a summary of the aforesaid question to be printed on the ballot along with the question as stated in section one and to print said summary.

If a majority of the votes cast in said Town in answer to said question is in the affirmative, said Town shall be taken to have authorized the sale in said Town of all alcoholic beverages to be drunk on the premises for restaurants having a seating capacity of less than one hundred persons. Said licenses shall be subject, however, to all the other provisions of said Chapter 138.

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.”.

Counted vote requested
114 voted in the affirmative
5 voted in the negative

Article 13 Background

Asks the state legislature to adopt a home rule petition.

Under current regulations:

- Restaurants with 100 or more seats are eligible only for an “all alcoholic” license
- Restaurants with fewer than 100 seats are eligible only for a “wine and malt” liquor license.

Reading can issue up to 24 “all alcoholic Restaurant licenses” over 100 seats.

- 13 have been issued – including 4 clubs

Reading can issue up to 5 “wine and malt restaurant licenses” under 100 seats.

- 2 have been issued

This proposal does not change the total number of licenses of each category that the Town can issue.

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Surveyed 6 communities in our area

- 6 abutting Reading, and
- 10 other communities with successful downtowns.

Of the 16 communities

- 5 require 100 seats or more for an “all alcoholic restaurant license”. Belmont, Melrose, Wilmington, Winchester, and Woburn. One other has a 50 seat minimum - Stoneham.

- 10 have no minimum other than what is established by the licensing authority. Amesbury, Andover, Arlington, Concord, Lexington, Lynnfield, Marblehead, Newburyport, North Reading, Swampscott, Wakefield.

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 The Board of Selectmen secured input from the community:

- Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA)
- Reading/North Reading Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Committee
- General public hearing – notice in the newspapers, RCTV, and mailed to Town Meeting members – 3-11-08

There have been no objections to the proposed change, and the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Committee, and those in attendance at the public hearing support the change.

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 Why make the change?

- ◆ Commercial space in downtown Reading tends to be fairly small and it is a challenge to find a location that will fit a 100 seat restaurant
- ◆ Some smaller specialty restaurants would like to serve alcoholic drinks commonplace with their food – for example Mexican restaurants with margaritas
- ◆ The vitality of Reading’s downtown depends on a mix of uses including the potential for smaller specialty restaurants

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 The Board of Selectmen has adopted very tight regulations for all liquor serving establishments including extensive training requirements, and the Police Department is vigilant in enforcing regulations including sales to minors with periodic “stings” to enforce the seriousness of liquor licensing responsibilities.

Our liquor serving establishments have pledged to work with the Town (through RCASA) on enforcing underage access to alcohol, and have shown themselves to be responsible business owners.

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 The process will be:

- ◆ Vote of Town Meeting
- ◆ If successful, and act of the legislature
- ◆ If successful, a vote of the Town on the April 2009 local election ballot.

ARTICLE 14 – On motion by Ben Tafoya, member of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted to pursuant to Section 2-6 of the Reading Home Rule Charter, to declare the following seats of Town Meeting Members to be vacant and remove those persons from their position as Town Meeting Members for failure to take the oath of office within 30 days following the notice of election or for failure to attend one half or more of the Town Meeting sessions during the previous year:

Precinct 2

Robert L. Green
~~Lizabeth Ann Malinski~~
Christopher A. Powers
Karen Lynn Powers
Donald C. Stroeble

Precinct 4

John B. Latham

Precinct 5

Patrick M. Fennelly
Thomas Joseph Quintal

Precinct 6

Diane N. Slezak

Precinct 7

John E. Carpenter
Michael Carmen Merullo

Precinct 8

~~Andrew Patrick Murphy~~

ARTICLE 3 – On motion by Harvey (Pete) J. Dahl it was moved to remove Article 3 from the table.

ARTICLE 3 – On motion by Harvey (Pete) J. Dahl, Precinct 7, it was moved to request the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee to bring a warrant article or other plan to Fall 2008 Town Meeting that will address the much needed road repairs in the Town of Reading, and do so without proposing a debt or capital exclusion, or a proposition 2 ½ override.

Motion Carried.

On motion by James E. Bonazoli, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, it was voted that this Annual Town Meeting stand adjourned sine die.

Meeting adjourned at 11:19 p.m.

158 Town Meeting Members were present.

A true copy. Attest:

Cheryl A. Johnson
Town Clerk