In The Matter Of:
Andover Annual Town Meeting
Day One

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TOWN OF ANDOVER

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

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PROCEEDINGS

MODERATOR DOHERTY: The hour of 7 p.m. having arrived, it is my distinct honor to call to order the 2014 Town of Andover Annual Meeting. My name is Sheila Doherty, and I am extremely grateful to be here in the position of Moderator; and I want to welcome all of you.

How many here are first-timers to a Town Meeting? Will you raise your hands?

Wonderful. Congratulations and welcome.

And I won’t even try to figure out who the oldest member is; but I’m so glad you’re here.

I would ask you all, please, to be at a seat; and if you would stand while we do the presentation of the colors by American Legion Post 8.

(March the Colors.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Vispoli, if you could lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance of the United States of America recited.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: And we have members of our high school choral group who will sing "America."
(America the Beautiful sung.)
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Please remain standing.
(Post the Colors.)
MODERATOR DOHERTY: It's my privilege tonight to introduce to you Reverend Lyndon Myers of the Andover Baptist Church to offer an invocation.
REVEREND MYERS: I would ask you to hold your neighbor's hand.
Now, if you would join me, bow your head, close your eyes, and let us pray.
Father God, we thank you for this day. Father God, we thank you for this light that you have blessed us with. Father God, we thank you for this town. We thank you for the governance of this town. We thank you for the citizens of this Town of Andover, oh Lord; and we ask your blessings this evening, Lord, to be on this meeting. We ask your blessings to be in this house right now, oh Lord. We ask your blessings to be upon all people who are responsible here for the governance of this town. We ask your blessings to be upon the people who are responsible, Lord, for this town. And we ask you,
Lord, that your blessing would be in this town --
not only this evening, not only during this
meeting, but we ask your blessings to be in this
town throughout this entire year and all the years
there are to come.

So, Lord, we thank you in advance for what
you will accomplish here through these citizens of
Andover. In Christ Jesus' name we pray; and we say
together, Amen.

Amen. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry. Please
remain standing. I'm sorry. You will be sitting
long enough tonight.

I don't know about many of you, but it
seemed like there were a number of very
significant -- not that everyone is not
significant -- but significant losses in our town
this year of key citizens who have been very much a
part of this body. And I would like you, please,
to take a moment to remember all those who have
passed on this year.

And at the risk of missing some, I think
there are some that absolutely should be mentioned:
Charlie Hatch, who was at one time the moderator of
this meeting, member of the Finance Committee, 
member of the South School study committee; Mr. Al 
Retelle, a long-time election officer; Dorothy 
Graham, who was seen at almost every meeting up 
until two years ago; Greg Rigby, who was certainly 
very passionate about a voter and citizen's right 
to know; Dick Collins -- words are hardly 
necessary; Ray Lavin; and certainly a citizen who 
was taken way too soon, Colleen Ritzer. 

I ask you please to remember these and all 
who have gone before us who have been a part of our 
town. 

    Now, if you'd like to be seated, that 
would be great. Thank you. 

    Mr. Urbelis, nonvoters? 

MR. URBELIS: Madam Moderator, I move -- I 
move to admit Paul Symanski, Larry Murphy, Mike 
Mansfield, and others -- some of whom may be 
speaking, and others who may be entering hereafter. 

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Can we get this mic 
on, please? Would you try it again please? Do it 
again. People didn't hear you. 

    MR. URBELIS: Madam Moderator -- 

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Can you hear him?
THE FLOOR:  No.

MODERATOR DOHERTY:  It's this first mic.

MR. URBELIS:  Madam Moderator, I move to admit Paul Symanski, Mike Mansfield, Larry Murphy, and others who may be entering hereafter, some of whom may be speaking.

MODERATOR DOHERTY:  Motion's been made and seconded to admit nonvoters.

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Those opposed?

Thank you. If you'd admit the nonvoters, please, to the nonvoting section.

Mr. Urbelis.

MR. URBELIS:  Madam Moderator, I move to waive the return of service and allow the Moderator to refer to the warrant article by number and subject matter.

MODERATOR DOHERTY:  Motion's been made and seconded to waive the return of service so that we can refer to warrant articles by number.

All those in favor, please say yes.

THE FLOOR:  Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY:  All those opposed, say no.
Thank you. The ayes have it. The motion passes.

The voting sections of our meeting tonight -- Section 1 will be right here. Section 2 -- could someone please look to see where you are in row L?

THE FLOOR: These are 9.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could you raise your hand on row L?

In this middle section, that is the last row of Section 2, okay?

In row M, you are the first row of Section 5 in this middle section.

So I've got 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 -- 7 is up there blocked off at the moment; and 8 is the nonvoting section.

Any question on the sections?

I'd like to introduce to you the folks on the stage. To my right, your left, is the school committee, the superintendent, the Board of Selectmen, the Town Manager, and the Finance Director.

To my left and your right is the Finance Committee, with Town Counsel and Town Clerk.
Over to my left, your right, is the ombudsman. He will be available for anybody who needs help with an amendment. He does have the three-part forms if you need them. They must be indicated in writing; and he's got those forms.

I read in the paper over the weekend that we were going to have a tumultuous meeting. I'm not sure if we are or we are not. But I want to make a comment about that.

You can disagree on any position of any official or any resident that you care to at this meeting, but I will insist that it be done respectfully. I will insist that there be no disparaging remarks as to character or insinuation of negative motives on any of the elected officials or town employees.

I can promise you that I will do everything I can to protect and to preserve your right to ask a question, to get an answer; but I will insist that, if we are going to have a lively discussion, if we're going to have disagreements, if we're going to pull things apart, that's fine, well, and good. That's what this is about.

But it will not be tumultuous in any
negative aspect.

First of all, before we start -- I try to usually do this at the end -- but I think the Town Clerk, Larry Murphy, and his staff, deserve a tremendous amount of credit -- along with the facilities managers here.

If you notice, we have two fabulous new screens. If somebody could -- could you put up on the screen what it looks like in the cafeteria? Is that possible to put up here?

If we were to have an overflow tonight, we have also set up the cafeteria that would be able to -- no, we can't do that?

So those -- those chairs are all set up so that if there were an overflow crowd, you would be able to see them, and they would be able to see you.

I think you will all admit that -- maybe even a round of applause -- admit the seats are more comfortable.

(Applause.)

And as poetic justice, now the town boards are sitting in the very uncomfortable seats.

So let me just go through a couple of
housekeeping items: You might want to take a look
in your Finance Committee report on page 127 -- if
you want to take a look at any Procedures at a
Glance for our meeting.

You must be seated if we are taking a hand
or a voice vote; or you must be standing at a seat
for your voice to be included.

When addressing the meeting -- and this is
what's a little bit different in this facility --
we have a pro/con down here -- a mic -- and a -- a
pro mic and a con mic.

We have a pro mic and a con mic in the
back. If you're making a presentation, you can use
either mic 3 or 4 there on the landing in front of
the handicapped aisle.

If you have a point of order -- and let me
remind everyone what a point of order is -- I don't
know what question we're on, Madam Moderator. I
don't think the form is correct.

If you have a point of order, you can go
to any one of those two mics, ask your point of
order, and we will address that immediately. If
you have a question -- and last year, I think,
sometimes the point of order mic was being hijacked
for speeches -- if you have a question, you're absolutely entitled to ask it. I will limit you to 15 seconds on a question.

If you want to give a dissertation and an opinion, that's what the pro and con mics are for.

Does everybody understand that?
We won't use point of order mics for opinions and dissertation on the -- on the topic.
I will accept a motion to move the question from anywhere in the room, however, you have to be recognized, and your motion has to be seconded.

As is my responsibility, I will weigh whether enough discussion has happened. So if we've only heard from two people and someone moves the question, and we have 15 people waiting to speak, I'm sure I will give opportunity for more input.

All questions are to be directed to the moderator. If you have a financial interest, please identify that interest before you speak -- whether you are a speaker or a presenter.

If you are going to offer an amendment to an article, we will vote on the amendment first.
If that passes, then that becomes the main motion, and we go back to a discussion on the main motion.

   Budget numbers -- when we get to the budget, Article 4 -- because it is such -- has been such a moving target what those actual numbers are, the budget numbers will be moved as stated and as shown up on the screen. They, in all likelihood, in some cases, will be different than what's in the Finance Committee report. Because as you can -- as you may know, that Finance Committee report was put to press several weeks ago.

   So they may be different than what's in your report, but the number that's moved and that is showing in the screen -- many of you received when you came in an amended Article 4 with the budgets; so if you just keep that in mind -- it may be different than what's in your books.

   And lastly, as has been our custom, I would like to make a motion -- get a sense of the meeting in terms of time limits -- and this is a motion by the Moderator in this case.

   So I would move that for this Town Meeting that we impose a time limit of five minutes for presenters of an article and three minutes for
speakers from the assembly.

    The Moderator will be -- will let the
speaker know when they have 30 seconds left; and I
will do that by tapping my podium lightly
(indicating).

    These time limits can be extended at the
discretion of the Moderator.

    All those in favor of that motion, could
you please raise one hand?

    Thank you.

    Those opposed?

    Thank you. The motion clearly passes. We
will -- we will operate in that manner.

    If you could go down to the presentation.

    Normally at this point on the first -- on
the second night of the meeting -- normally on the
second night of the meeting, we stop and we
recognize one of our citizens for the Virginia Cole
Community Service Award; and tonight I thought it
would be very appropriate that we would take a
moment to make this presentation now on the first
night.

    I wanted to make this presentation this
evening to a gentleman who has passed away this
past year. I know that many of you joined me
tonight in noticing a very familiar face was
missing among the election officials.

Our recipient this year for the Virginia
Cole award is Al Retelle.

(Applause.)

There are so many reasons why we are
pausing tonight to recognize Al. And it could be
because of his love of nature and his efforts to
protect open space; you could say it was for his
love of skiing, and for all those who he opened up
a whole new sport and activity. The man had a love
for the sport, but a patience for teaching; I could
attest to that personally.

It could be for his many years as an
election official during this meeting, as well as
at the polls. We could also be recognizing him for
his passionate plea on the floor of the 1957 Town
Meeting, when he appealed to the Town Meeting to
establish the conservation commission; and we
did -- I didn't, but the Town Meeting did.

It could be his passion for inventorying
the Davis land so the generations to come will know
the beauty of open space in our town; and it could
be that he would give you the shirt off his back
and then give you another one because he knew that
would get dirty; and it could be the nearly 60
years of giving to this community that he had.

Our recipient this year raised his family
in Andover. He was passionate about our athletic
teams. He was passionate about our public safety
and the preservation of the town he loved. To his
children -- Peter, Bob, Terry, Nancy, and Julie --
you have, of course, entered the ranks of those
whose fathers were bigger than life and who taught
us that God, family, and community are important --
in that order -- that giving back is just not a
good idea, but it should be a way of life; that to
have lived your life and been graced with good
friends and the love of family will leave you a
very wealthy man; and to try always to leave this
world a little better because you were here.

Al taught us by his actions, these very
critically important lessons. I am personally so
honored to ask Al Retelle's wife, Evelyn -- who, in
her own right, has given much to our town -- to
accept this award on Al's behalf -- the 2014
Virginia Cole Service award.
(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Evelyn.

Now, any -- any questions as to procedures?

Let's start.

Article 1, Mr. Murphy.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

Can you hear me okay?

This is -- Article 1 is the report on the annual town election, which was held on March 25th. There are a total of 1,277 ballots cast. For the position of Moderator for a one-year term, there was only one candidate on the ballot -- incumbent, Sheila Doherty of 9 Juniper Road -- who was elected with 956 votes.

For the Board of Selectmen, there was one open term -- one open seat for a three-year term. There was two candidates on the ballot -- Mary T. O'Donoghue of 69 Salem Street -- who was declared the winner with 941 votes. Also on the ballot was Jodi B. Oberto of 11 Hartford Circle of 309 votes.

For School Committee there was one candidate on the ballot for one seat for a three-year term -- that is Joel Blumstein of 3
Athena Circle -- who was elected with 895 votes.

For the Andover Housing Authority, one seat for a five-year term, one candidate on the ballot -- John K. O'Donoghue of 32 Lucerne Drive -- who was elected with 891 votes.

And for two seats, each for three-year terms on the -- trustees on the Punchard Free School -- we had two incumbents -- Donald F. Schroeder of 204 Haggetts Pond Road, who had 833 votes, and also James V. Sutton of 214 Farrwood Drive, with 813 votes.

All of the candidates were subsequently sworn into office.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Article 2,.

Mrs. O'Donoghue.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: I move that Richard J. Bowen, 12 Bannister Road, be elected trustee of the Cornell Fund for three years.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Article 2 has been moved and seconded. All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?
The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Article 3, Mr. Kowalski.

MR. KOWALSKI: Madam Moderator, I move that the Town Moderator receive a salary of $250 for each Annual Town Meeting and $60 for each special Town Meeting, except when it falls within an Annual Town Meeting.

THE STAGE: Is there a second?

Mr. Kowalski, the selectmen's recommendation?

MR. KOWALSKI: The Board of Selectmen recommend approval.

THE STAGE: And Mr. Barry, the Finance Committee's recommendation?

MR. BARRY: The Finance Committee recommends approval.

THE PANEL: Is there any discussion?

Seeing none, all those in favor, please raise your hand.

All those opposed, raise your hand.

The ayes have it. Motion passes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Kowalski, motion No. 2, please.

MR. KOWALSKI: Madam Moderator, I believe
that's your motion.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry?

Oh. It's my motion. I'm sorry. I move
that the following salary -- I'm sorry. I move
that the following salaries be elected -- for the
elected officials -- for the selectmen, the
chairman at 1,800; for the members of the board,
1,500; for the School Committee, the chairman,
1,800; for the School Committee members, 1,500.

And the Finance Committee report, please,
Mr. Barry.

MR. BARRY: Finance Committee recommends
approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: All those in favor?
Are there any questions?
Yes, sir.

MR. DESO: Madam Moderator, Tom Deso, 81
High Street. According to the explanation provided
with this article, the selectmen and school
committee members are salaried, and their
compensation was set by Town Meeting 15 years ago
and not by the town charter, therefore, it must be
voted every year. The unintended consequence of
this annual vote is that elected officials are
eligible for health insurance compensation.

    I had considered offering an amendment to
this article to eliminate the salaries of elected
officials. I believe that would be punitive to the
spirit of the article, however, which is to
recognize the service our elected officials -- even
in this small token way.

    I would remind voters at Town Meeting,
however, that this option remains open next year in
the event that an article that appears later in the
warrant is not approved this year by the state
legislature. I encourage you to support this
article. Thank you.

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

    Any other comments?

    Are you looking to address this article?

    THE FLOOR: I have a question.

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: You go right ahead.

    If you could identify yourself, please.

    THE FLOOR: I'm Bonnie (inaudible) at

Granli Drive.

    I -- he may have covered the relationship
between this article and Article 23 --

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: But this is the
article we're talking about; not Article 23 right now.

THE FLOOR: So as a point of order question --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go ahead.

THE FLOOR: -- is there no requirement to help the Town Meeting attendees understand direct relationships between the articles -- especially when an article comes before another later article.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Right. Currently right now -- before us -- is the salary only; not any other benefits that the -- but there will be something later, as you know, that will address any benefit issues.

THE FLOOR: Okay.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Thank you. All those in favor, please say aye.

MR. COLEMAN: Madam.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry. Go right ahead.

Could you identify yourself please, sir?

MR. COLEMAN: Don Coleman, High Street.

I have a question about Town Counsel, Tom Urbelis, acting as Town Counsel as well as
president of the Andover home for the aged. I think that is a distinct conflict of interest, Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. I understand that, but that's not the question before us right now. That --

MR. COLEMAN: Well, he will benefit from a town pension.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: That would be a question to ask the selectmen at a selectmen's meeting.

MR. COLEMAN: Well, I tried -- March 1st I tried, and they refused to answer.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. But right now we're looking at the School Committee and the selectmen's salaries. That's all that's before us right at the moment.

MR. COLEMAN: Well, check into his double-dipping. That's all.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: And I talked about tone and innuendoes. Okay.

All those in favor, please say aye.

THE FLOOR: Aye.

Thank you.
Those opposed?
Thank you. The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Article 4 is the budget. And before we get into the budget, there will be three presentations to you: One is, as many of you know, the role of the Finance Committee is to report to Town Meeting. So the chair of the Finance Committee will give us his -- the committee's report to the Town Meeting. Then there will be a report from the chair of the Board of Selectmen and the chair of the School Committee.

So Mr. Stumpf, if you'd like to take over.

MR. STUMPF: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'd like to begin my opening remarks by thanking a few people; and, in particular, the town manager, superintendent, and their teams, the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and the Finance Committee members.

We have been working diligently in an effort to bring forward a balanced budget; and I would like to thank you, everyone, for their efforts.
Thank you to the Town Clerk and all the town employees involved in preparing the venue for tonight's meeting; and most importantly, thank you to everyone in attendance this evening and for participating in the Town Meeting process.

Tonight I have the pleasure of providing an overview of the town's recommended budget and other recommendations that will have a significant financial impact on the town. A one-page graphic summary of the town budget model is shown on the slides above to help provide clarity in how the numbers flow.

The overview will consist of the following four main topics: First, we'll give an update on some good news for the town. Secondly, an overview of the anticipated revenue; next, an update on health insurance and our unfunded obligations; and then a few thoughts with looking ahead.

Concerning good news, the -- there's a number of very good things the town has. First of all, a very strong tax base. We're fortunate to have a good mix of commercial, residential, and industrial taxpayers. Those taxpayers provide funding for operating expenses and also
supportive -- are supportive in providing funding
to maintain our infrastructure.

The new Bancroft School is entering its
final stages of construction and will be ready to
welcome students when they open their new year in
August.

Also, the town has maintained its Triple A
bond rating. This positive rating allows the town
to borrow money with favorable interest rates that
lower our overall cost of borrowing.

Additionally, the most recent report has
been issued for OPEB -- or other post employment
benefit -- obligations; and that obligation has
been lowered significantly.

Concerning anticipated revenue, the
proposed fiscal year 2015 budget reflects a
significant change voted by the Board of Selectmen.
The budget has historically been based on property
tax revenues increasing to the full extent allowed
by Proposition 2 1/2; and most of our annual
increase in spending occurs within those limits.

This year the Board of Selectmen
instructed the town manager to base his amended
2015 budget on an amount approximately 1.1 million
dollars less than a full levy would allow.

After subtracting the contractual obligations and other expenditures, the net amount available for town and school operating budgets is an increase of approximately 2.9 percent.

Regarding health insurance, there are some significant changes that will occur in fiscal year 2015. In prior years, Article 4 appropriation covered health insurance cost for all town and school employees, including retirees, but excluding retired teachers. Retired teachers currently are enrolled in the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission -- the GIC.

The costs for the retired teachers are charged back to the town by the state. This assessment is done via the state Cherry Sheet and does not require appropriation at Town Meeting. The assessment is part of the overall budget model, but, again, it does not require appropriation at Town Meeting.

In fiscal year 2015, the retired teachers will be moved back into the town's health plan, and the cost will be included in the health insurance line item in Article 4. As a result, the health
insurance appropriation line item in Article 4 will increase, but the state assessment will decrease.
The net change from fiscal year 2014 to 2015 is a reduction in health insurance costs by approximately $38,000.

Also, it's important to note that most changes to the town's health plan need to be negotiated with the Public Employee Committee -- the PEC -- which represents town and school employees.

Regarding unfunded -- our unfunded obligation, the town has two large unfunded obligations: And those are the retirement fund for pensions, and other post employment benefits -- or OPEB -- which is primarily health insurance for retirees.

The retirement system uses an actuarial-based funding schedule to determine pension appropriations. The valuation occurs every two years, and the town's next valuation will be available this summer. The current unfunded obligation is $97 million and needs to be fully funded by the year 2040.

The town's unfunded obligation for OPEB is
estimated to be $145 million, based upon the most recent valuation. This is a $70 million reduction from the last valuation, which was completed two years ago.

The town's recent action to move eligible retirees to Medicare plans and the implementation of recommendations within the Town Manager's OPEB recommendation report helped to bring down -- bring about this reduction.

The fiscal year 2015 recommended budget has OPEB funding, as is outlined in the Town Manager's recommendation report.

In looking ahead, by far the town's single greatest asset and also largest expense is the salary and benefits of town and school employees. Andover's labor contracts are based upon 15 separate collective bargaining agreements. Great care must be taken to negotiate agreements that are fair to employees, while also affordable to the town.

In closing, I'd like to thank you for your attention and, most importantly, for joining us at this year's Annual Town Meeting.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.
THE FLOOR: Is it possible to ask a question?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you wouldn't mind waiting till the three boards report, then I'll be happy to let you take questions before we start the vote.

Is that fair?

Thank you, sir.

Mr. Vispoli?

MR. VISPOLI: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

The three points I want to share -- I'd like to share with you up front about -- the FY '15 budgets are; all departments will see a budget increase this year. We are proposing in the FY '15 budget not taxing to the levy limit; and this budget is supported in agreement with all three boards: The Selectmen, the School Committee, and the Finance Committee.

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, I would like to first start off by thanking all the people who have worked together in developing the balanced budget plan being presented here tonight. This budget would not be possible if it were not for the hard work, diligence, and cooperation of
all three boards, the Town Manager, the school superintendent, and their respective staffs.

All of these dedicated town and school officials serve on behalf of the citizens of Andover, and they deserve our thanks for a job well done.

The budget process is indeed one of, if not the most important things we, as Andover public officials, are charged with doing each year.

Andover's recommended operating budget is $155.6 million for the fiscal year 2015. The total budget plan is $163.7 million if you add in capital projects, appropriation articles, and other various non-appportioned costs.

The proposed budget that we will be discussing tonight in the town and school departments will see approximately a 2.9 percent increase over the current fiscal year, FY '14. This increase represents about a million dollar additional budget for town departments and approximately $2 million in additional budget for the school department.

We have heard the collective voice of Andover citizens asking for tax relief this year.
Therefore, we did not tax to the full capacity. The Board of Selectmen, in agreement with the Finance Committee and School Committee, is recommending not to use $1.1 million of tax capacity to fund next year's budget.

This is reflected in a budget presented to you tonight. One of the overarching concerns that was apparent, having short and long-term implications, was the rate of the property tax increase that needed to be addressed.

This year we also felt the impact -- we all felt the impact of the Bancroft School project. And this past year was the first year of the payment schedule hitting our tax bills on the average of $85 per the average tax bill. Next year, we will see an additional $91 as the full payment program begins.

We all get one tax bill. The rate of increase that was initially recommended was concerning. The Selectmen began to look at ways to get us on the road to reduced spending, have a positive impact for the taxpayer in this upcoming year, and agree on a process to provide direction to the Town Manager early -- earlier in the next
fiscal year budget planning process.

As said earlier, it takes many months to develop a well-thought-out, balanced budget proposal for Town Meeting; and it really is an ongoing process. Again, at the end, the result is a balanced FY '15 recommended operating budget that is supported by the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen, and the School Committee, together -- a budget that is realistic, affordable, and sustainable. We urge your approval of this proposed budget plan tonight. Thank you.


MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Coming to a Town Meeting is a little bit like going to a baseball game, and I hope everybody has the latest scorecard. In this document, which was published two weeks ago, we had some updates. So the new scorecard -- the new warrant Article 4 was handed out when you registered; so I trust everybody has the new scorecard for tonight's meeting.

THE FLOOR: No.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: No, you don't?

Could -- okay. We'll get them to you.
We'll get them to you.

Are there any election officials who could grab some, please, and pass them out?

Are you going to speak...

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: I'm going to have a few.

Here we go. All right. The slide that you see on the screen represents the budget that is in Article 4, the scorecard that you will have shortly. This reflects exactly what John Stumpf and Alex Vispoli spoke about in terms of a 2.9 percent --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Excuse me for one second.

We have here -- are there some election officials -- the counters who could just help out in their sections?

That's what I'm asking you to do -- give them to the -- if the counters, please, could come down and grab a bunch -- I don't know how many "a bunch" is, but if you could grab a bunch and make sure your sections have them.

As I -- as I indicated to you, all those numbers will be up on the screen before we vote.

I'm sorry, Mr. Town Manager. If you want
MR. STAPCZYNSKI: All right. Thank you.

So the sheets that you will get will show the summary of this -- the details behind this slide that's in front of you now; but it represents the 2.9 percent increase that was mentioned previously, and the key points of this budget I will get into in a minute.

I would like to address the -- the budget for the town side of the budget; and Chairman Gilbert and Doctor McGrath will speak about the school budget.

In the town budget -- the highlights in the town budget this year -- we have a -- a 2.9 percent increase, as previously mentioned. It's basically a level services budget, with some minor service expansions; and they can be highlighted in the -- the new FTEs. Four new FTEs -- full-time equivalent positions -- are added into the budget. And you see that we have a total of 355.2 FTEs. That's the -- that's about the same number of FTEs that we had 10 years ago.

One of the measures that the Selectmen have asked me and their department heads to do over
the course of the last 10 years is to level our increases in new positions. So as you can see, we've been very careful in the new positions that we have recommended and Town Meeting has approved.

The ones for this year is a new program coordinator position for youth services, elder services, additional hours for transportation coordinator, information technology, a new applications specialist part time, municipal services, new electrician position, municipal services water, additional hours for an office assistant; and in police, additional hours for an office assistant as well.

And then in municipal services water division, addition 300,000 for water treatment plant maintenance out of that budget; and then in water and sewer, the sum of 269,000 for the OPEB ARC -- that's our annual retired contribution -- for those employees in water and sewer.

And then I think you will be happy to know that in our utility and energy budgets, we have been able to stabilize them, due to energy efficiency measures we've undertaken in the past several years and the related conservation
programs.

Under the obligations, there are several highlights that I want to point out. John Stumpf did mention health insurance and retired municipal teachers. One of the tasks that I and the Board of Selectmen undertook this past year was to bring the retired municipal teachers from the GIC into our health insurance program; and we did that.

Previously, the retired municipal teachers in the GIC were funded out of the assessment -- assessments that the state levies upon us. They levy us assessments for the retired municipal teachers, for the transportation programs, for mosquito control, for the students that might be going to charter schools out of town -- that sort of thing.

So we were able to save $209,000 on a combined basis by bringing the retired teachers into our town's health insurance program; and as John mentioned, that had a direct impact on our actuarial report for our OPEB going forward.

Our debt service, as Alex mentioned, went up $1.9 million, due mainly to the addition of the Bancroft Elementary School coming online and the
debt coming online; and then our OPEB trust fund --
we are funding that at 1.6 million -- partly out of
the general fund, partly out of the water and sewer
fund, and partly out of free cash.

Major projects -- Chairman Gilbert will
say a few words about the Bancroft School, so I'll
pass over that; but I would like to report that the
Andover Youth Center is under construction. Last
summer we did the utility work -- brought utilities
to the site. And today -- if you would be out
there today, you'd see that the contractor is
building the stone wall, the footings, and the
foundation -- the forms for the footings and
foundations will be going in this week, re-bar is
on site; and by Thursday or Friday, we intend to be
pouring concrete for the foundation of that
facility.

For town yard and municipal services, that
new facility -- the staff -- myself and staff will
be presenting a report to the Board of Selectmen
with options. Hopefully a year from now we will be
bringing a solution to the town yard municipal
services facility to the Annual Town Meeting.

And Ballardvale Fire Station -- the
Selectmen have -- we will be talking about that with staff over the course of the next several months and hopefully bringing a program future -- to a future Town Meeting to resolve the Ballardvale Fire Station dilemma.

That is my report.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

Mrs. Gilbert, please.

MRS. GILBERT: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

Hello?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you could raise your hand so they know which mic. Thank you.

MRS. GILBERT: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

I would like to begin by making note of an important milestone we're approaching for our school system and our community. This month the construction of the new Bancroft will be complete. The school will officially be turned over to the town on schedule on May 22nd; furniture and technology will be delivered and installed during the month of June; demolition of the existing building will take place over the summer; and final site work and landscaping will wrap up in late October.
We now look forward with great anticipation, excitement, and pride to the first day of school this fall, when we will open the doors of the new Bancroft to our students, our teachers, and our community.

On behalf of the School Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many, many people who have worked so hard and so well to make this school a reality; and I would especially like to thank the Andover community for its steadfast support. We are very grateful.

Final reconciliations will be done in the coming months, but I am pleased to say that, when it is complete, this project will cost less than what was authorized by Town Meeting.

(Applause.)

Moving on to the FY '15 school budget, as you can see from this slide -- if it's -- next slide, I think -- the next one. There you go.

As you can see from this slide, one of our priorities each year is to look for ways to reorganize so that we can deliver services more efficiently. This year is no exception. The FY '15 school budget reflects a significant reduction
in the number of instructional assistants.

Instructional assistants are professionals who play a critical role in our district, providing one-to-one student support in specialized programs, assisting both IEP and general education students in the classroom, and providing health and safety supervision in hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds.

Andover does have a relatively high number of instructional assistants compared to similar districts. And given that our community, like so many others, is looking to slow the growth of its spending, this is an area that the superintendent and her staff have put forward as an opportunity for reorganization and reduction.

We wish to emphasize that we will continue to meet the needs of all students on IEPs and those who require one-to-one assistance. However, next year, principals will make changes in how other areas of service delivery are covered by your instructional assistants.

All told, staffing changes in the FY '15 school budget will result in a net reduction of 35.71 FTE positions.
Even as we make this change, it is also vital that we remain true to one of our most important goals, which is to keep our school district moving forward every year through continued investments in our strategic plan.

At this time, I'd like to ask Doctor McGrath to describe some of the new initiatives that are reflected in the FY '15 school budget.

DOCTOR McGrath: Thank you, Chairperson Gilbert; and I'd like to also welcome our democracy in media students who are here this evening as part of their coursework, because they actually observe the Town Meeting.

In addition to addressing student needs based upon enrollment and the demographics of our student population, this budget request also addresses the strategic plan, which provides learning experiences that develop essential competencies -- like communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving.

The requests on the slide before you build on a strategic -- on strategic plan investments you supported during the last three Town Meetings. The United States is experiencing two radical shifts
with regard to its labor force: Project focus
workplace environment, and a rapid shift to a
global economy. Rich technological infusion is
both a cause and an effect of these shifts. It's
imperative that we align our programs to reflect
them; and these requests meet that strategic
objective.

First, the high school computer science
positions will, A, provide our high school students
with a greater number of sections in computer
science, engineering, web design, ap development,
and Java, since we are entering our third year of
offering such courses.

These positions will also allow us to
offer an intern and extern engineering and design
development opportunity. Our third-year students
will be able to work in teams to research, design,
and construct solutions to engineering problems,
working with community members identified through
our partnerships with local businesses, colleges,
and universities.

Third, these positions will enable us to
offer new computer science courses at the high
school. Andover is one of 30 public school
districts nationwide selected to participate in a three-year national pilot program with Code.org. The partnership will provide curriculum, professional development, and mentorship support for our teachers.

The elementary digital learning specialist position will provide our elementary schools with the baseline staff necessary to assist in our transition to digital learning. These teachers will be available during the school day to provide planning and instructional support for teachers as they implement technology-enhanced learning activities and assist in the implementation of the Code.org computer science curriculum in grades 3 through 5; and the literacy specialist position will expand our intervention strategies to improve student achievement in reading and writing at the elementary level. The PreK through 5 literacy specialist will apply specialized knowledge and skills in reading and writing content and instruction to plan for direct services to students, analyze student assessment data, and work in a leadership role with teachers.

The other exciting investments included in
the budget we are asking for your support this
evening are a new K through 8 math program to be
implemented in September 2014 to replace the math
programs currently used.

The new adoption materials will provide
teachers and students with a framework that draws
on the best practices and highlights
problem-solving as the key focus.

A new engineering program for grades 6
through 8 that will also be partially funded by our
good partner, the Andover Coalition for Education.
This implementation will mark the first time all
three middle schools will have a coordinated
engineering program whereby students will design
projects while expanding their coding knowledge
based upon the needs of their particular project.

And also beginning in September 2014, the
program additions listed for computer science will
make computer science a standard part of the APS
curriculum.

We know that education is a high priority
for our community. We recognize the challenges
before our Town Meeting are considerable; and we
know the demands for public services is not limited
to education.

Our community has long valued its best investment in the potential of each and every student. We are eager to do our part in maintaining the quality of life that makes Andover such a special place to live and to raise a family.

To that end, we ask for your full support of this request and look forward to working with you to meet your expectations. Thank you for the consideration of our budget this evening.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Doctor McGrath.

Yes, sir. Do you have a general question?

MR. ARAI: I had a specific question about the changes in the OPEB liability, because I don't think that -- that they've actually been made very clear for the audience.

So my question is, is it not true -- because I've read the -- the OPEB reports from the auditors -- the 2009, 2011, and the 2013 reports.

Is it not true that the change in the discount rate -- which is an accounting aspect of the calculation -- more than accounts for the entire reduction in the OPEB liability; and that,
except for this change in accounting choice -- this accounting assumption -- that OPEB has steadily increased over the last four years?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Who can answer that question?

One moment, please. Finance --

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Yes. The question that you asked was about the discount rates, and I really have to defer that to our actuary. We -- as you said, we've had actuarial reports in '09, '11, and 13; and we will be having a presentation from our actuary sometime in May or June -- it will be a tri-board meeting; the public is invited to attend; and you can ask the question there.

But I really don't feel qualified, myself, to be able to address that specific nuance of how the actuary evaluated the liability going forward.

MR. ARAI: Well, that's disappointing, as I asked you this exact came question at the last tri-board meeting where we had all the OPEB documents. I don't want to waste everybody's time here with that, but the fact of the matter is that those reductions -- as reported by three different accountants -- the change is entirely driven by
this discount rate; and that all the other changes
that the town has made are small potatoes by
comparison.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Sir,
before you sit down, can you identify yourself,
please? I don't believe you did at the beginning.

MR. ARAI: I'm sorry. My name is Max
Arai; I live at 66 County Road.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Max.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: You know, in terms of
changes, there were a number of changes that took
place between '11 and '13. One of them was plan
design -- we've changed our plan design. That
was -- that was one big change that took place.

The other change that affected the actuary
report was a plan that I put forth in September
that showed a funding this year and going forward
of our liability. That's why I mentioned
previously 1.6 million is being appropriated -- if
it should be appropriated at this Annual Town
Meeting -- that's the plan; and that was shown to
the actuary; and they took that funding plan into
consideration.

So there are a number of things the town
has done and the town will do to reduce our OPEB liability -- retired teachers is another example.

So I would invite you to come when our actuary presents the report publicly and can defend the use of the discount rate and any other questions that you may have.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir, do you have a question about the reports that were just given?

MR. HOWE: I do.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: You go right ahead. Identify yourself, please.

MR. HOWE: I'm Richard Howe, 3 Robandy Road; and I have a question for the School Committee or the superintendent.

My question is, does the School Committee or superintendent plan to present to this Town Meeting a presentation on the collective bargaining agreement that has been approved and signed by the School Committee?

MS. GILBERT: We don't have a planned presentation, but we're happy to answer questions if you have them.

MR. HOWE: I have a question for the Town Counsel or Town Manager relative to collective
bargaining agreements.

   Is it true that Town Meeting has no right
   to consider collective bargaining agreements,
   except at the first Annual Town Meeting after a
   contract is approved and signed -- is that true?

   MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could you repeat the
   question, please, Dick?
   Could we have No. 4 mic up a little,
   please?
   Go ahead.

   MR. HOWE: My understanding is that Town
   Meetings only report an ability to consider a
   collective bargaining agreement that occurs at the
   first Annual Town Meeting after that agreement has
   been signed and approved. In all subsequent years,
   Town Meeting has no such right.

   Is that -- is my understanding correct?

   MR. URBELIS: What do you -- what do you
   mean by the word "considered"?

   MR. HOWE: A right to hear the details of
   a contract, and consider them, and ask --

   MR. URBELIS: You can hear the details of
   the contract.

   MR. HOWE: Fine. Madam Moderator --
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir.

MR. HOWE: -- I would like to move that
the School Committee portion of the budget be -- be
tabled until such time as the School Committee
had -- can provide this Town Meeting with a
complete summary of the benefits and details of the
recently-signed collective bargaining agreement.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Would you consider,
Mr. Howe, making that motion when we get to that
part of the budget?

MR. HOWE: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Thank you. If
you -- if you wouldn't mind --

MR. HOWE: If that item --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'd like to get
started on the budget, unless there are separate
questions on an overall basis.

MR. HOWE: Thank you. I'll hold it.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Can I state something to
the gentleman?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: What?

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Can I state something to
the gentleman?

(Off-the-mic discussion.)
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go ahead.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Yes. Just one second.

For the gentleman from Old County Road, would you please either email me your address so I can make sure that you are invited to the meeting, so we can get back to you on your specific questions -- the actuary. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Let's get started on the budget.

If you would, Mr. Vispoli.

MR. VISPOLI: Yes, Madam Moderator. I move line items 1 and 2, public safety in the following amounts: Line item 1, personal services, $13,978,678. Line 2, other expenses, $1,559,212, for a total of $15,537,890. This includes $200,000 in parking receipts, $70,000 in detail fees and $1,335,500 in ambulance collections.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Items No. 1 and 2 have been moved and seconded in the amount of $15,537,80.

Mr. Vispoli, the Selectmen's report, please.

MR. VISPOLI: Selectmen recommend approval of this article, Madam Moderator.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Are there any questions?

MR. COLEMAN: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Who's saying yes to me? If you could get to a mic, please -- identify yourself.

MR. COLEMAN: Don Coleman, High Street.

I am very concerned about this new clerk's position that's been proposed and the high amounts of licenses that have been allowed. I think I live in a safe town. I've lived here my entire life, as have generations of Taylors and Colemans before us. And I wonder -- I have all the respect for our new chief -- if we need all these licenses; and I wonder if having this new clerk expedite the process, madam -- a processing of licenses are going to help our area.

And I am very concerned what happened on Canterbury Street within the last year when a gun, held by an FBI agent, was not locked up. That
concerns me, Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I appreciate that fact.

MR. COLEMAN: I beg your pardon?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I appreciate that fact.

MR. COLEMAN: No. But we have to protect our children, people our age, and our senior citizens. That's what stunned me the most when I heard Alex's presentation and Madam Gilbert -- that the senior citizens were not mentioned in this town; and they're a vibrant force --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Coleman, we're on No. 1 and 2 of the budget, please.

MR. COLEMAN: Okay. But I wanted to respond to what happened previously. But I wonder -- and I would like a response from the new chief -- if we really need to expedite these licenses in Andover.

Are these people really in jeopardy, Chief? And are they innocent people who are not carrying firearms -- like most of Great Britain and Ireland -- are weak, and, you know, trepidation, please.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. The question's been asked. Let's give the chief a chance to answer, and we can move on.

CHIEF KEEFE: We are just expediting the process by a couple of weeks (inaudible).

The -- correct; number of licenses has increased -- that's increased statewide; we're just a part of that.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

Line item 1 and 2 -- yes, sir, do you have a question?

MR. HINDIN: Point of information, Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead, sir.

If you could identify yourself.

MR. HINDIN: My name is Robert Hindin. I'd like to go back, if I might, to something that the Town Manager said. A gentleman spoke a little bit earlier regarding OPEB and his dissatisfaction with what he has learned from Town Manager.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir, if I could --

MR. HINDIN: No, I'm not -- excuse me -- point of -- point of information: Town Manager asked the gentleman to give him his email address.
Could that be sent -- could the invite be sent to 
all town residents, rather than just one person?

(Applause.)

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Yes. We can make it 
 easy for you. If you go on the town's website, you 
can sign up for our eBlast that comes out once a
week or once every two weeks. Go on AndoverMA.gov;
sign up; we will alert people -- as we do every
week -- to important events that are happening.
Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 1 and 2
have been moved and seconded. All those in favor,
please raise one hand.
Thank you.
Those opposed?
Thank you. The ayes have it. Line items
pass.

I also think at this time -- a point of
personal privilege for myself -- in light of the
deaths we've seen of firefighters in this state and
the police deaths that we've had of people who are
willing to put their lives on the line for us every
day, we should be giving them more than just our
vote of their budget, but maybe a round of
applause.

(Applause.)

Line items 3 and 4, Mr. Kowalski.

MR. KOWALSKI: Madam Moderator, I move line items 3 and 4, general government and community development, including town, school, IT consolidation. Line item 3, personal services in the amount of 3 million -- excuse me -- $5,391,742; line item 4, other expenses in the amount of $1,996,392, for a total of $7,388,134, including $25,000 in receipts from wetlands filing fees.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 3 and 4 have been moved and seconded in the amount of $7,388,134.

Mr. Kowalski?

MR. KOWALSKI: Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any questions or comments?

All those in favor, please say aye.

Thank you.
Those opposed?

The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Line item 5 and 6, Mr. Major.

MR. MAJOR: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

I move line items 5 and 6, municipal services, in the following amounts: Line item 5, personal services in the amount of $5,089,141; line item 6, other expenses in the amount of $5,477,191, for a total appropriation of $10,566,332, which includes $65,000 in rental receipts and $56,000 in cemetery revenue.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line item 5 and 6 have been moved in the amount of $10,566,332.

Mr. Major?

MR. MAJOR: The Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Any questions?

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?
Thank you. The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Mrs. O'Donoghue?

MRS. O'DONOGHUE: I move line items 7 and 8, library, in the following amounts: Line Item 7, personal services, in the amount of $1,988,517; line item 8, other expenses, in the amount of 641,000, for a total appropriation of $2,629,517.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 7 and 8 have been moved and seconded in the amount of $2,629,517.

Mrs. O'Donoghue?

MRS. O'DONOGHUE: The Board of Selectmen recommend approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any questions? All those in favor, please raise one hand. Thank you. Those opposed? The ayes have it. The motion carries. Line items 9 and 10.
Mr. Salafia?

MR. SALAFIA: Madam Moderator, I move line items 9 and 10, community youth, elder services in the following amounts: Line item 9, personal services, in the amount of $1,324,303; line item 10, other expenses, in the amount of $488,870, for a total of $1,813,173, which includes $500,000 and $50,000 in user fees and $55,000 in grants.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 9 and 10 have been moved in the amount of $1,813,173.

Mr. Salafia, Selectmen's report, please.

MR. SALAFIA: Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any questions or issues?

MR. DESO: Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir.

Could we have No. 1 mic up, please, if you could identify yourself again, please, Tom.

MR. DESO: Tom Deso, 81 High Street.

I move to amend line item 9, personal
services of the budget, by reducing the amount 
allocated to $1,269,885.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: $1,269,8 -- and?

MR. DESO: 85.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: -- 85. Do you have 
that in triplicate?

THE FLOOR: I do.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could I have a copy, 
please?

Mr. Barry, could you grab that from him, 
please?

There is an amendment to change -- thank 
you -- the line item 9. So if you would, please, 
address just that amendment.

Thank you, sir.

MR. DESO: Thank you. The reduction in 
the budget for this line item is $54,418. This 
line item was increased just recently by a vote of 
the Board of Selectmen, who, after many shifts in 
course over the past few months in direction to the 
Town Manager in setting his budget, directed yet 
another change to authorize adding an FTE in the 
youth services department for a program 

coordinator.
I opposed this position for several reasons: No. 1, despite what you have heard, this position does not fund the social worker to counsel youth and families on the hazards of heroin, painkillers, and prescription drugs.

We are being asked to fund, according to the Town Manager in last week's Townsman, quote, "a mid-level position of program coordinator that specializes in working with groups and families on program development and counseling. It's what the team does already."

The Town Manager in that same article indicated that, during earlier discussions with staff concerning this position, it was clear that the position was not intended to focus on the heroin problem, but was to be more broad-based.

Second, the Town Manager, in his original budget, was faced with the request of the AYS director to fund two new positions. After discussions, he decided to fund the other position, not this one.

In effect, the AYS director then went directly to the Board of Selectmen to lobby for funding for this position.
Third, the debate, discussion, and vote on funding this position have all taken place in a very compact timeframe, totally framed about -- around what are described as "several heroin overdose deaths" last year and a rise in nonfatal overdoses this year.

I would submit that there are several departments in town that might have some direct bearing on assisting with this problem, only one of which is youth services.

Community services might be in a position to offer outreach and education programs to families. The Board of Health could certainly play a role. Police and fire rescue are already acting as first responders. The Board of Health could certainly have a positive effect.

Finally, we have a school department in town that touches all of our school-aged children and already has trained healthcare specialists on staff. While I'm not suggesting that youth services is not the place to have such a person, I am suggesting that this issue has not yet been vetted properly, because it has come up just in the last few weeks.
I would submit that we do not have a crisis here. We have a problem; and we should take the time to determine the best approach to solving the problem.

Fourth, I believe that the issue of drug abuse is being used to justify a position in the budget that was not originally recommended.

I would submit that the Town Manager -- had this position been originally advocated as a drug counselor -- would have thought twice before not recommending it.

Finally, I believe that decisions based on emotion are generally not the best decisions. Let’s take the time to determine the problem and apply resources in the best way to the solution to this issue.

I urge support of my amendment. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go ahead. Go ahead. If you can identify yourself, please.

MS. CARBONE: Yes. My name is Mary Carbone, Cyr Circle.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, ma'am.
MS. CARBONE: I would like to say ditto to the previous resident of the community who just spoke at great length. I have previously spoken to this issue at a tri-board; and I truly feel that this position belongs on the school side of the event, where the schools already have a person available that would counsel our youth on this issue.

And I also feel that the youth of this community have to show more respect for the police, public safety in this community who are trying to do their job. I've been in this town since 1976. I know there's been a problem. And the youth of this community, in general, generally don't expect [verbatim] the public safety officials. They have to be taught that they have to show respect. I'm not saying it's an overall issue, but, in general, it is an issue.

So basically I'm actually in favor of the previous speaker and the amendment of 54,000 which, in addition, would include health coverage and other perks. So I thank you for listening.

(Appause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Mary.
Yes.

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Mary O'Donoghue, 69 Salem Street. I too am totally in favor of this amendment. The original budget for this department was voted by the Board of Selectmen at $1,269,885. The Town Manager recommended that appropriation without this position being added.

So I have total -- I'm in total agreement with the sentiments that have been made here. I'd also like to speak to the issue of the budget process.

The process allows for every department to present their request -- to present the request for fiscal '15. The Town Manager made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mrs. O'Donoghue, I need to stop you here --

MS. O'DONOGHUE: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: -- 'cause we're talking about this amendment right now.

MRS. O'DONOGHUE: Gotcha. So I can't talk about the actual process?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: No, not at -- not this
point, 'cause we're talking only about the
amendment.

MRS. O'DONOGHUE: Okay. I guess, then, I
cannot address what I wanted to say.
But I will address it at a Board of
Selectmen's meeting in the future, and I would just
like to close by saying --

(Applause.)
I'm 100 percent in favor of this. Thank
you.

MS. COSTAGLIOLA: Madam Moderator --
question.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. This is the --
wait a minute.
This is the con mic over here.

MS. COSTAGLIOLA: To be against the
amendment?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Pro here. This is a
con. This is con. This is a con. So this is a
con.

And if you could identify yourself,
please, ma'am.

MS. COSTAGLIOLA: Diane Costagliola,
Belknap Drive. In addition, I'm the chairperson of
the Andover Youth Foundation. I'm speaking against
the amendment that was recently made for
proposed -- to take away the youth service worker,
which was approved at the Selectmen's meeting.

It was very clear when anybody listened to
Mr. Fahey in his presentation at the Selectmen's
meeting and in subsequent articles that what he was
looking for -- what he has been looking for is a
youth service worker that had a community service,
social worker background that could develop
programs which would be of a preventative nature
for the youth in the community.

He is looking to have this person be a
bridge between what the social workers do at the
high school and what happens after hours. Like it
or not, our children spend most of their time out
of a school and not in school. There are
tremendous support systems in school, but when
they're gone, they need help; and this is a
preventative person who is going to bridge that
gap. We need to keep this position in the budget.

Bill and his crew have worked hard and
long with these people for a very long time. They
have not had a new position in their budget since
2003; and they service thousands of people in the community.

Whether people like it or not, we do have a crisis, and we need to address it. And we need to address it with this position for Andover Youth Services. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Hang on a second.

Yes, sir. Go right ahead. There somebody's here that has been waiting ahead of you. One second.

MR. GUSTAS: Gerry Gustas, Fern Road; also to speak against the amendment. I was nowhere near as well prepared as Mr. Deso was. One of the things that he said is what lept me out of my chair when he talked of the police as being the first responders, and it strikes me that they're the first responders to the tragedy; and that this position is the first responder prior to the tragedy.

The youth services was born in this town from a -- a suicide epidemic; and I think that, you know, we need to look past the $64,000. And we need to, you know, understand that this is a needed position now, given what's going on with the --
with the explosion of drug abuse in Andover as well; and I would recommend that we vote to defeat this amendment. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Are you ready to vote?

Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Go ahead.

Identify yourself, please.

MR. COLEMAN: Don Coleman, High Street.

The gentle lady wanted a solution? I will tell her a solution. Work. It doesn't hurt anyone. And we don't have one Andover child working McDonalds -- like Jay Leno, and I did, and others I can see here in the auditorium tonight. I paid 100 percent for my college education, and I'm proud of it. And if these kids had a job to go to -- if they played sports -- as many of us did -- instead of seeing kids every Saturday and Sunday blocking the entrance to CVS in $250 Ozzie boots -- I am fed up.

We have to talk brass tacks tonight. We are not rich and famous in this town. We're not any better than anybody else.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Coleman --

MR. COLEMAN: And if these kids went to work, they wouldn't have time to get into
foolishness. Give them a job.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Coleman, we're talking about budget. I understand what you're saying.

Yes, sir.

MR. LANDRY: Madam Moderator, I have a question on this amendment: This position was added -- Bob Landry, by the way, Seminole Circle.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

MR. LANDRY: This position was added -- as Mr. Deso said -- relatively late in the budget process. What I'd like to know, could you review again how the Town Manager found funding for this position? Because he -- I think the instruction was to stay within the revised budget constraints that the Board of Selectmen had put on the town.

And could you just review again the numbers that I think were put forward in the Board of Selectmen's meeting as to where the $54,000 came from?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Do you have those?

One moment, please.

Go ahead.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Yes, I have that
information. This -- the instructions I had -- as Bob said -- was to revise my recommendation and cuts and to add this position back. I had originally -- had recommended a lesser position, a program assistant, not a program coordinator. The Selectmen asked me to bump that up to a program coordinator, and I did so.

And the funding for the program coordinator came from -- we reduced -- or I reduced the accumulated benefit account by 20,000; I reduced legal expenses by 15; and then, in municipal services, there were several accounts that totaled $19,418, for a net reduction in those budgets totaling 54,418; and that 54,418 was added to the -- the youth services personnel line that we're discussing tonight.

So it was done in a revenue-neutral manner, which worked out to the advantage of all.

MR. LANDRY: Okay. If I could follow-up, Madam Moderator, on that. The -- so the accounts you're talking about though -- I'd just like to distinguish between what these are actually operating line items or if they're simply cash accounts that have excess balances in them?
Because, you know, if we're going to be funding a full-time position that's going to be coming on, we'll own that for as long as we own it.

And how much of this is coming out of just excess cash? Because I'm hearing cumulated benefit account. Is that just a cash account -- excess funds in a cash account?

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: No. That's an appropriation that we make every year. Generally it's 400,000. We do an analysis about this time every year to see who would be retiring, who might retire; and we oftentimes adjust it to a more realistic level.

MR. LANDRY: How about the streetlight? Isn't that municipal service -- some type of streetlight fund that was over funded?

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: No. The streetlights are -- as a -- that is a line item in the budget; and depending on the cost of streetlights, what the tariff is from -- from NGRID -- that fluctuates every few years. So sometimes we have a surplus; other years we don't, depending on, again, the cost for the -- or the tariff for the particular street light.
MR. LANDRY: Okay. Thank you very much for the clarification.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir. Let's go on this, and then we'll vote on the amend.

MR. COTTON: I have a question about this.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry. If you would...

MR. COTTON: Steve Cotton, Pomeroy Road.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

MR. COTTON: The only thing I've heard so far about what this position will or won't do is a summary in the newspaper article about it. Could we hear from Mr. Fahey about what this position is intended to do?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go ahead.

MR. FAHEY: Good evening everyone. My name is Bill Fahey. I'm the director of the Andover Youth Services; and as a lot of the young people like to say, I'm the founder of the youth services. I've been here since day one.

I started here on a grant in 1994. So it's hard to believe it's been my 20th year here. And what it was, was a reaction to something that was going on in the Andover community -- three
young people had committed suicide. And the situation was a task force was put together, and they started talking about other ways to approach --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Fahey -- excuse me. I'm going to ask you to just keep your comments to this amendment, please. No. Mr. Fahey, just if you could keep your comments to the amendment.

MR. FAHEY: Thank you. Absolutely. The process is a year-long process. In the fall we were asked to ask the Town Manager what we would like to -- for our departments. I requested two positions. The one that we're talking about this evening was a program coordinator specifically focused on support positions for this community.

That was -- came from a direct result -- I've asked for a position since 2000 -- for this position. Usually when I ask for a position the answer is, You can have the position if you raise the fees and pay for it.

Well, in this particular case, after we've seen a dramatic increase -- you've read the newspapers; you've heard the governor of the state
talk; you've heard the Merrimack Valley talk loud
and clear. We have rising problems for our young
people in terms of lots of different issues -- one
of them happens to be heroin opiates.

It's a small percentage in this community,
but we have other issues that -- mental health
issues, pressure on young people.

The community is changing. The family is
changing. We've been -- we are a use development
agency; we've been talking about arrests around the
state in this community -- very effectively; we're
probably the smallest or second smallest budget in
this community. What we do is take your tax
dollars and work very hard on behalf of these young
people; and try to come up with proactive solution.

This was a proactive solution. We stepped
forward as a town department and said that we would
like this position that will work young with their
families. What you're going to get for your
taxpayers for 60,000, roughly, is a person with
master's level degree that will come here and work
with your young people in youth development.

They're not -- they're going to come here
and they're going to work probably 100 hours a
week. And they're going to work with young people and build partnerships, and they're going to build programs in the community, at the youth center, and will work with anybody in this community that wants to make things happen for the young people.

I take great offense to people saying that the young people are disrespectful in this community. I think they're the best in the world. They're a reflection of you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Fahey, your comments --

MR. FAHEY: On the telethon they raised $150,000 for this community -- over 300 kids stood up there and volunteered their time to make it happen. That's who they are.

This position went through the budget process. Yes, it will work on heroin opiate issues. Yes, we followed the process.

The discussion that we can have today is, are we going to vet it out? We're going to study it? I disagree with that language. I think we have a solution. I think we have a proven track record. I'm asking the taxpayers to please support this position. You know, this position will make a
difference in our community.

   It will help our families and young persons and anybody in this community that wants to -- thank you for listening to me.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. We are going to vote. We are going to vote on the amendment.

   The amendment is to amend line item 9 of the budget to this number: $1,269,885.

   All those in favor -- if you could please be seated if you want to be counted.

   All those in favor of the amendment, please raise one hand.

   Thank you.

   Those opposed?

   I think it does not win, but let's take a vote, please. All those in favor of the amendment please stand.

   When they have counted your row, please sit down.

   COUNTER: As we're doing our first standing count, know who your counter...

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Once they have counted your row, please be seated so that the counters can see who the next row is.
Yes, he has, Donald.

COUNTER: Okay. Section 1, please.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Would you please turn up mic 1?

COUNTER: Section 1?

THE FLOOR: 14.

COUNTER: 14 in section 1.

Section 2, please.

THE FLOOR: Section 2, 26, 2-6.


Section 3?

THE FLOOR: Section 3, eight.

COUNTER: Eight.

Section 4?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Are we still counting in Section 4?

COUNTER: I'm sorry, but we are still counting.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could we go into section, please? Could you go into Section 5 while she's still counting?

COUNTER: Section 5.

THE FLOOR: Section 5, 29.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.
COUNTER: Section 5 is 29.

Let's get Section 4 here.

THE FLOOR: Section 4, 73.

COUNTER: I'm sorry we rushed you.

Section 6.

THE FLOOR: Section 6 has 33.

COUNTER: 33.

Section 7.

THE FLOOR: Section 7, 18, 1-8.

COUNTER: 18.

There should be no voters in 8; is that true?

Bob, what have you got?

THE FLOOR: Section 8 has one.

COUNTER: One.

9, 10, 11, and 12 are down in the mess hall -- down in the mess hall -- down -- cafeteria. I don't think there's anybody down there.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: There's nobody there.

COUNTER: Is there a vote from the hall, Charlie Heseltine --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: All right. All those in favor --

THE FLOOR: Wait a minute. Charlie
Hazeltine has the people out there. We're checking people in, so we need the people in the hall. Is Charlie around?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I understand.

COUNTER: What have you got? Is Charlie around?

THE FLOOR: 11; there's no voters in the cafeteria.

COUNTER: There's no voters in the cafeteria. But there are people checking people in. So that's why Charlie's there.

You said 11?

THE FLOOR: 11.

COUNTER: 11. And then we have a stage count.

THE FLOOR: Stage count is three.

I have -- are you including me? I have four.

COUNTER: Stage is 4. That should be everything now.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. All those opposed to the amendment, please stand.

COUNTER: If you can clear that -- do you want the count? Do you want a full count?
Look for your counter and then please sit down. He has to look through you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you are not standing for a vote, please sit down.

COUNTER: Can we do Section 1, please?

THE FLOOR: Section 1, 25, 2-5.

COUNTER: 25.

Section 2.

THE FLOOR: Section 2, 599, 59.

COUNTER: 59. Section 3?

THE FLOOR: Section 3, 15.

COUNTER: 1-5. 15.

Section 4.

THE FLOOR: Section 4, 53, 5-3.

COUNTER: 53.

Section 5, please?

THE FLOOR: Section 5, 62.

COUNTER: 62.

Section 6.

THE FLOOR: Section 6 has 76, 76.

COUNTER: 76.

Section 7?

THE FLOOR: Section 7, 29, 2-9.

COUNTER: Section 9. Any voters in 8?
THE FLOOR:  Section 8, four.

COUNTER:  Four votes.

Charlie in the hall, please?

THE FLOOR:  Cal, we --

COUNTER:  I didn't hear a number.

THE FLOOR:  10, 1-0.

COUNTER:  10.

And the stage count is?


COUNTER:  1-7 on the stage. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY:  Those voting in the affirmative are 212. Those in the negative are 350. The amendment is lost.

Let's go back to items No. 9 and 10 in the amount of $1,813,173.

Any further discussion on that?

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

Thank you. The ayes have it, clearly.

The motion passes.

Line item 11 and 12, Mr. Vispoli.

MR. VISPOLI:  Yes, Madam Moderator. I move that lines 11 and 12 unclassify the following
amounts: Line item 11, the compensation fund $550,000. Line item 12, from the reserve fund, $200,000, for a total of $750,000.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line item 11 and 12 has been moved and seconded in the amount of $750,000.

Mr. Vispoli?

MR. VISPOLI: Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: The Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any questions?

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

Thank you. The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Line item 13, Mrs. Gilbert.

MS. GILBERT: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

I move line item 13, Andover School Department in the following amount: $70,904,452.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line item 13 has been moved and seconded in the amount of $70,904,452.
MR. POKRESS: Point of order.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir.

MR. POKRESS: Madam Moderator, Bob Pokress, 3 Cherrywood Circle. I would like to move an amendment to this line item.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go ahead.

MR. HOWE: Madam Moderator, I'm sorry. I -- I withheld my motion.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: You did. You did.

Mr. Pokress, would you yield to this gentleman who very kindly -- I'm sorry, Mr. Howe. Go right ahead.

MR. HOWE: I would like to move that the school department budget line item 13 be laid on the table until such time as this Town Meeting has received a complete presentation outlining collective bargaining settlements and contracts recently agreed to.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Do you have that amendment? Oh. It's a motion you're making?

MR. HOWE: It's a motion to table.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Your motion to table. Okay.

Is there a second, please?
Okay. It's been moved and seconded.
Would you like to address that?

MR. HOWE: Just briefly.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead.

MR. HOWE: It is my understanding that the only time Town Meeting can consider and appropriate funds for -- the only time that it can adequately consider a collective bargaining agreement -- a multiyear collective bargaining agreement is during the first Town Meeting after that agreement has been signed.

I have -- in my eight or 10 years here, I've never heard a complete presentation to Town Meeting on a collective bargaining agreement.
But this -- collective bargaining agreements.

THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: What's your point of order, sir? If you could get to a mic.

If you could just go up to the mic in the back please, Jim. Could you go up to the mic in the back?

THE FLOOR: (Inaudible) Greenwood Road, Andover, Mass. I just have a question regarding
tabling a motion. Isn't discussion on the tabling
out of order?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: No. We're not tabling
the motion. We're -- we're being asked to table
the vote on the budget.

THE FLOOR: Excuse me. Isn't the motion
to table -- you're not supposed to discuss a motion
to table. Once a motion to table is presented --
my understanding -- discussion doesn't take place.
A vote takes place to table. That's the point of
tabling the issue.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: He's made a motion;
and I think he's entitled to explain why he has
made that motion.

THE FLOOR: Okay. So that's going to be
the rule on future issues also, then?

I just don't want to get ruled out of
order if somebody wants to table something in the
future and then is told they can't speak on the
issue.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Well, if there -- if
there's a motion before the meeting to table
something, I think it's only fair that the meeting
hear why this gentleman wants it to be tabled.
THE FLOOR: Okay. I just don't believe that's the normal course of business under Robert's rules. But okay.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: We don't run by Robert's rules. You do know that; okay.

MR. HOWE: Thank you. The earlier numbers that we received from the school department budget indicated that some 80 percent of that budget is salaries. It's clear that most of that is driven either directly or indirectly by collective bargaining.

I believe that Town Meeting should consider the budget, it's the single most important role that this body has; and that collective bargaining is a large portion of the town budget. Therefore, in the interest of transparency, I would like to see a -- a complete presentation from the school department on the collective bargaining agreement that has recently been signed.

It seems to me that several years ago we saw a wonderful presentation on the Bancroft School. Took about 20, 30 minutes. This agreement is many times more expensive than the Bancroft School. And it seems to me that the Town Meeting
could at least have the information necessary to
make an informed vote on the school department
budget and to have this information before it does
so.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Howe, as to
process, do you have -- at what point do you want
this to be reconsidered? We certainly can't go
indefinitely without considering the school budget.

MR. HOWE: No. I will -- once such a
presentation has been made -- I hope it would be
the first order of business -- perhaps tomorrow
night -- that such a presentation could be prepared
in the meantime; then a motion to take it off the
table would certainly be in order at that point;
and I would support such a motion.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Thank you.

Mrs. Gilbert?

MS. GILBERT: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

We did -- just to clarify -- we have given a
complete presentation to all three boards in a
public meeting. We can, if we can -- I can ask my
colleague, Paula Colby-Clements, who sat on the
negotiating subcommittee to give an overview of
that presentation now.

MR. HOWE: Madam Moderator, I would be happy to hear that presentation that was made before. It seems -- I'm -- I'm surprised that there was no mention of it made. There's a small item on page 2 about collective bargaining. It's about five sentences long. And something of this significance deserves more information and more discussion, I believe, with questions and answers.

If Mrs. Clements is prepared to make that presentation this evening with the slides and other things that she showed at that previous presentation --

MS. GILBERT: We don't have the slides, but we can go through an overview.

MR. HOWE: -- then -- I think the slides would be helpful. If they were presented to a tri-board meeting previously --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Well, let's see --

MR. HOWE: -- we should have it also.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Let's see what the -- let's see what the temperature of the meeting is as to accepting this tabling.

All those who are in favor of -- all those
in favor of tabling line item 13 at this time,
please raise one hand.

    Thank you.

Those opposed?

    I think that has it. But would you like a vote?

Do you want a standing vote?

All those in favor, again, please raise one hand -- of tabling line item 13.

Those opposed?

    I believe the opposition has it. So the -- the request is lost.

    We'll go back to Mr. Pokress and his line item and amendment.

    MR. POKRESS: I'd like to ask Ms. Denise Wall, who has an amendment to this line item -- that I'd like to allow her to make before mine.

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Before yours. You're just pushing yourself so far back the question is going to be moved, and you won't be able to speak.

    Go right ahead.

    MS. WALL: I'm Denise Wall from 2 Blueberry Hill Road. I move to amend Article 4 Town Meeting fiscal year 2015 operating budget line
item 13, reducing it by $50,000 from the budget request of $7,904,452 to $70,854 --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: 70,000 -- I'm sorry.

Could you repeat the number again?

MS. WALL: 70,854,452.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Do you have that in triplicate, please?

MS. WALL: I do.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could you bring that up to us?

Mr. Barry, would you mind?

Paul, do you have a -- do you have scanner there?

Go right ahead if you want to explain.

MS. WALL: Yes. I have been asked by parents of children who are on or in need of an IEP or a 504 plan to present this amendment tonight. And I was asked to present on their behalf, as they felt there might be some retaliation to their family members.

So these parents would like to propose a $50,000 reduction to the school's legal budget as a symbolic gesture. This gesture is to shed light on the recurring situation within our school
administration. The school's special education department has been employing legal tactics against special ed families to keep them from pursuing the proper remediation desperately needed for their children.

This legal pressure needs to stop. The cost to the town and to our families has risen over the years, while the town's special education program has left numerous children and families in emotional and/or fiscal financial crisis. Supporting this point is the latest Eagle Tribune article regarding laying off instructional assistants.

Most of these families have lived in this community for many, many years and have yet to meet the family that wants to hire a lawyer or an advocate for their child to simply receive the necessary services these kids so desperately need.

People may say Andover parents are litigation happy, And they are always -- there are always those parents who want to -- the town to pay for the children's private education.

On a personal note, I can tell you the people I'm speaking for are not those people. The
parents that I'm speaking for are your child's
soccer or baseball coaches, parents who are
involved in the community in many, many ways.

They are the ones who actively are
fund-raising for our schools and towns. They have
educated themselves on learning disabilities by
consulting experts, going to workshops and
webinars. They want their children to be educated
in Andover, but they need the proper programming
and the support and understanding of the school's
administration.

This spring, the new board of SEPAC
conducted the first ever needs assessment survey,
which ended on April 17th. They received 887
responses from parents.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Is this specifically
to this 50,000 that you're speaking now, please?

MS. WALL: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Specifically to this
50,000?

MS. WALL: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead.

MS. WALL: Okay. Thank you. SEPAC has
already shared the re -- redacted data to the
School Committee and to the school superintendent. This parent committee is looking forward to working collaboratively with the School Committee and the administration, and that positive change for their learning disability child is on the horizon.

In the survey there were numerous mentions of language-based learning disabilities. These learning styles -- such as dyslexia, processing speed, and word retrieval -- are highly hereditary.

With the dedication and perseverance of Andover's families and School Committee, we are confident that Andover will be on the forefront of change. By transferring our legal dollars to creating an exemplary program for special ed children, by incorporating transparency, research, and training, Andover will become a town that, with other towns, will be looked at for guidance and inspiration instead of a town that uses our tax dollars to litigate against taxpayers.

These parents would like to thank you for your time and support of this amendment.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Are you addressing the amendment?

MS. CROMER: Yes.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you could turn up mic No. 1, please. Thank you.

MS. CROMER: Hi. My name is Cindy Cromer, 3 Island Way; and I'm in favor of this amendment. I'm also a parent of a child with a learning disability. I am supporting this amendment on behalf of all parents with children who need additional services and are not receiving them.

My family's lived in this town for 17 years; and my son was not offered the services he needed until it was really too late to help him very much.

To get these services, we had to have external testing done at our own expense; we had to have an advocate; and we had to pay a neuropsychologist to come to a meeting. I guess we were lucky because we didn't need to hire a lawyer, but that was our next step.

Receiving much-needed services for a child who needs them should not require a battle against student services department of the school administration.

Additionally, services should be available to all children, even if their family can't afford
the minimum -- roughly $5,000 price of admission to
the program.

This amendment is meant to send a message
to the School Committee and the school
administration. The current process is
unacceptable. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you very much.

Doctor McGrath. Doctor McGrath.

DOCTOR McGRATH: Thank you. With respect
to legal costs and legal hirings of attorneys,
whether there is -- it's a general education issue
or a special education issue, the district retains
an attorney if the parent or the guardian retains
an attorney.

This is done to protect both the district
and the town. Legal costs are primarily in the --
are primarily related to personnel issues,
disciplinary issues, advisory to the administration
and to our principals, as well as training
opportunities for all of our staff.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Any other questions?

We're going to vote just on the amendment.

Does Finance Committee have any input on
this?

No. Okay.

Yes, ma'am.

MS. HANSON: Randy Hanson, Town Clerk -- excuse me -- Town Clerk -- 15 Pacho Street. I guess I forgot where I was.

Sorry, Larry.

I -- it is my understanding that we can reduce this $50,000, but in the long scheme of things, the School Committee doesn't have to put it to their legal services; am I correct?

DOCTOR McGRATH: Yes, that is correct.

MS. HANSON: So if we vote for this, it doesn't mean that it's going to go to legal services at all -- going to take it out legal services at all; am I correct?

DOCTOR McGRATH: That's correct.

MS. HANSON: Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. There's an amendment tonight floor here. All those in favor of the amendment, please -- we're not passing school budget. We're just -- we're just voting to accept the 50,000 reduction.

All those in favor of accepting the
$50,000 reduction on line item 13, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

Clearly it's defeated. Thank you very much.

We're back to the original motion of $70,904,452. Mr. Pokress, do you want to give anyone else cuts?

MR. POKRESS: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

Bob Pokress, 3 Cherrywood Circle.

Could you please put the amendment up on the screen to make it easier for people?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Do you have his amendment? Thank you.

Go right ahead, sir.

MR. POKRESS: To amend Article 4, Town Meeting, fiscal year, 2015, operating budget line item 13: To stipulate to the school department that, in conjunction with the spending authority, that the school department will be granted by the voters if line item 13 is approved, the funding of noninstructional overhead expenses, such as school monitors, assistant principals in schools that have
three or four assistant principals, and other
noninstructional overhead staff positions is to be
reduced by 255,000 and applied, instead, during FY
2015 -- to accelerating the adoption, improvement,
and teaching of stem courses and curricula and to
other instructional activities that will -- that
measurably improve the educational achievement of
students in the Andover school system.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: So if I --

MR. POKRESS: To clarify, this amendment
does not increase or decrease the total amount to
be approved in article 13. It provides stipulation
to the school department that a material portion of
that budget is not to be applied to
noninstructional activities, overhead staff
positions, for example, and, instead, to be applied
to educational and instructional activities.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: So may I ask a
question of you, sir?

Are you then asking this meeting to take a
vote to instruct the school department how to spend
their money?

MR. POKRESS: That is correct, Madam

Moderator.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Is that -- go ahead.

MR. URBELIS: General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34 says that Town Meeting, as the appropriate body, must vote on, quote, "The total amount of the appropriations requested and may not allocate appropriations among accounts or place any restriction on such appropriations," end quote.

MR. POKRESS: Madam Moderator, I suggest that this should be recognized as a rider on the contract between the taxpayers in Andover and the school department.

And if you will not allow this particular amendment to go forward, then I have an alternate version of this amendment that will reduce the budget overall by $255,000.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I -- I don't believe I can allow you, because it is an illegal amendment; that we cannot, as a Town Meeting, direct the school department how they will spend the money we appropriate.

MR. POKRESS: Then I would like to present this alternative version.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I would like you -- if you would -- please, because I've ruled it out of
order -- if you could withdraw this amendment.

MR. POKRESS: Madam Moderator, I withdraw -- with protest -- this particular amendment, because I believe there is always two sides to every legal issue, because the legal issue is always about alternate sides having equally strong legal opinions -- and in -- in place of that, I would like to submit the following amendment.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. So this article amendment -- this amendment to article -- I mean to line item 13 is being withdrawn -- I appreciate, under protest.

Go right ahead. What have you got next? Mr. Barry, maybe -- I'm sorry. Next time -- next time, don't take that seat.

MR. POKRESS: This was not my preferred amendment to put forward at the meeting, but if Town Counsel won't allow the preferred amendment to be put forward, then I would like to move to amend Article 4, Town Meeting, FY 2015 operating budget line item 13, reducing it by $255,000 from the budget request of $57,710,706 to $57,455,706.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: You're looking to
take -- that's not what it says.

MR. POKRESS: I am looking to propose reducing the budget by the same overhead expenses. I was proposing previously to shift into instructional activities in the school department.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: So you're looking to take $70,904,452 and subtract $255,000.

MR. POKRESS: I was addressing specifically line item --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: 13.

MR. POKRESS: -- 13, personal services.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: It looks to me like you're -- you're taking multiple millions out. I would think you would be looking at 70 million --

MR. POKRESS: No, I was -- there is a figure -- well, in the book that we were given prior to tonight, there was a figure for line item -- personal services -- of $57,710,706. Now it looks like that has been changed in the handout we got.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could you stipulate, sir, that the figure $70,904,452 minus $255,000, for the total budget would be $70,000 -- 649,452 -- 70 million -- I'm sorry.
MR. POKRESS: If the Town Clerk will confirm that arithmetic, I will affirm too.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Are you okay with that? Will you stipulate to that amount --

MR. POKRESS: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: -- 70,649,452, which is a decrease $25,000 to the school budget as proposed.

MR. POKRESS: Yes. Yes. That is correct.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead. And just for your correction, Mr. Urbelis did not not allow your amendment; I did not. But go right ahead. I love getting credit where I deserve it.

MR. POKRESS: As a 29-year resident of Andover, the son of two public high school teachers, the father of two children who attended Andover schools, and proud grandfather of five who now inhabit the world of public education, and, most importantly, I think, as far as my background for this particular point, as a former School Committee member when my children were in grade school, I should point out that I have no financial interest in this article or the proposed amendment.

As I was going to say, the amendment --
plain and simple -- was to stipulate that $255,000 of the approved line item 13 amount was to be shifted from spending on noninstructional overhead staffing to spending on actual instructional activities in order to move the needle educationally for our children.

At this point, since that won't be allowed as an amendment, I'm going to move the first half of what that amendment would have done, which is to at least reduce by $255,000 the amount being spent on noninstructional, noneducational expenses on the personnel side, such as staff positions, such as school monitors, excessive assistants principals in it various schools, etcetera.

I'll cite just two reasons using data from our school department and from public sources -- which I've put up in the slide that is on the screen. As the slide shows, Andover High School has fallen in the ranks of Massachusetts high school and is no longer even in the top 60 high schools in the state.

Those schools with whom school department leadership always likes to prepare Andover are not only more highly ranked than we are, but they get a
lot more bang for their educational buck when they
do, refuting the argument of the educational
establishment that you need to spend more per pupil
to get better academic achievement.

We spend the most per pupil in this group
of schools, with whom we like to compare ourselves,
yet get much lower levels of academic achievement,
as you can see from this slide.

There are a number of schools up there --
towns whose name everyone will recognize -- who are
more highly ranked than we are at Andover; and
whose annual budgets per pupil are far less than
what we currently spend per pupil.

There's nothing more special about the
children of Acton, Belmont, Westford, or
Winchester; that's the reason they have higher
levels of academic achievement. The kids in their
school system weren't born smarter. It's not the
amount that they spend per pupil -- in fact they
spend less than we do; and it's certainly not
anything in the water they drink.

So the question is, how does the school
system improve its levels of academic achievement
when the usual suspects were blamed for lower
levels of achievement are ruled out?

Having served on a School Committee, I
learned that one of the most important
responsibilities of a School Committee is
negotiation of the contract with the teachers'
union, since so much of what can and cannot be done
educationally gets locked into contract provisions;
and removing — as I should point out from personal
experiences — mediocre teachers and teachers who
are just phoning it in can require the metaphorical
equivalent of dynamite to get them out of the
classroom.

I'll skip over some of the other points
that I was going to make to reinforce the
importance of being able to shift the dollars that
we're not being allowed to at this Town Meeting
from noneducational, noninstructional overhead
to — to education and just point out that a "yes"
vote for this amendment will reduce — at least
reduce the spending that is noninstructional in
nature and allow the School Committee ideally to
focus its attention on those goals and objectives
that are educational and instructional in nature
and begin to break the back of the wasteful bloated
noneyeducational overhead spending --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Pokress.

MR. POKRESS: -- that's currently in our school budget. I ask for your approval of this amendment to line item 13. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any other comments about line item 13 -- about this amendment?

All those in favor -- yes, ma'am.

MS. ROBB: Thank you, Madam Moderator. My name is Mary Robb, 116 Lowell Street; and in the interest of full disclosure, I'm a social studies teacher at Andover High School. I'm a 15-year veteran of this school, but that doesn't matter. It also doesn't matter how long I've lived in the town, how many children I have in the system.

What does matter is that myself and several of my colleagues who are in the room this evening are not teachers who phone it in. And we provide a very good education in Andover.

I do want to --

(Appause.)

-- speak specifically to this amendment and thank both Mr. Pokress and the woman who spoke before him -- and I apologize; I do not remember
your name -- for demonstrating our democracy and media literacy students who are required to come here as part of a course we developed here unique to this school and praised by our state government and any number of national organizations.

They come here to see citizens in action, and you've demonstrated that clearly. You both have passionate feelings about this, and you prepared a presentation; and I applaud that; and I thank you for demonstrating good citizenship.

However, I would urge you -- as I have urged you in the past -- to come into my school and see what we do. You, sir, are making recommendations about something you do not have enough information -- I urge you to do that.

I do not know how else to get you to understand or how else to get the public to understand what we do every day. You heard from Bill Fahey about an increase in drug use in our students. You did not hear about the increase in anxiety. You did not here about the number of 504 and IEP meetings we go to every single week that detracts from the time that we can prepare.

I agree with you that we need to think
very carefully about how we spend our money. But there are tri-board meetings; there are School Committee meetings; there are Selectmen meetings there are Finance Committee meetings year round where these things can be hammered out before coming here and trying to hijack this process.

Please, sir -- please think about that the next time you submit an amendment.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Mrs. Gilbert, and then we'll take a vote.

MS. GILBERT: Thank you, Madam Moderator, could Mr. Pokress' slide go back up if you have it.

THE FLOOR: Excuse me, Madam Moderator,

can I --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: We'll hear from School Committee, and then I'll be happy to recognize you, sir.

Annie, do you have something you want...

MS. GILBERT: Yeah. Sorry.

While the slide is coming up, I did just want to point out there is a missing piece of information; and that is the enrollment numbers of each of the high schools Mr. Pokress listed.

MR. POKRESS: I can vouch for the fact
that when I --

MS. GILBERT: You know what, I'd like to finish.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: She's got the floor right now, sir.

MR. POKRESS: Okay.

MS. GILBERT: So, for instance, Belmont High School at this moment has 1,183 students. Yes, they have two assistant principals as compared to Andover High School's three assistant principals, but we have over 1,800 students.

Arlington, as of October 1st, has 1,185 students. They have one assistant principal and two house deans, who essentially round out that same administrative level. So they have the same number of assistant principals as Andover High, but roughly 700 fewer students.

If you go down the list of many of our comparable high schools -- for instance, Lexington -- we all like to compare ourselves to Lexington -- they have 2000 students, one principal, and six assistant principals, as compared, again, to Andover High with three.

Brookline has 1,832 students; almost
exactly the same as Andover High. They have one headmaster and seven assistant principals.

Newton North, 1,990 students; they have one principal and five assistant principals.
Newton South, 1,779 students; almost exactly that of Andover High, one principal and five assistant principals.

The fact is that we are at or below the average number of assistant principals of the schools that we like to compare ourselves to. And I could easily ask Mr. -- Doctor McGrath to go on at length about the value of those members of our staff. They may not be instructing in the classroom, but they are meeting the needs -- the social and emotional needs, the disciplinary needs -- of -- in our case, almost 1,800 teenagers every day.

I would ask that you vote against this amendment.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. I just want you to -- I just want you to know, we're going to take one swoop -- there are three people at mics now; that's all we are going to take; and then a vote.
Go right ahead, sir, if you could identify yourself.

MR. HINDIN: My name is Robert Hinden. I live and Wedgewood Drive.

First, I would like to start with a point of information before speaking on the pro side. Point of information: My understanding was that personal attacks against any speaker would not be allowed.

I think that the -- I did not catch the name -- the teacher from the geography department certainly registered a -- what I consider a personal attack against Mr. Pokress. I think it was very unfair; and I'm surprised that the Moderator allowed it.

To speak --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Point taken. Go right ahead.

MR. HINDIN: I'm sorry?

To speak on the pro side in support of what Mr. Pokress said, my wife and I are long-time Andover residents. We started a family in Andover, had three children. Our children went through the entire Andover school system. So I think that I'm
as well qualified as anybody to speak about the school system and the conditions that my children faced.

I think the first thing that people should take a look at -- I'd like to go back to the numbers, if we might, that were shown a moment ago. I think it's very hard to argue with the numbers. And I think it really doesn't matter whether we have 100 children in the school system or 2,000 children in the school system. It's not about the number of children we're educating. We are among the highest per-pupil expense -- our spending is among the highest per-pupil in this state -- as I think the numbers showed. You haven't gone back to that slide.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: It's right there, sir.

MR. HINDIN: I'm sorry?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: It's right there.

MR. HINDIN: Our cost of educating our children is among the highest in the state; and our academic ranging has dropped precipitously. Can't argue with that. It's not a numbers game.

Nobody on the School Committee has talked to that. They've spoken about the number of
students in the school, but they haven't addressed the quality of education. And quite honestly, the quality of education that we have seen in Andover has been pretty poor. There have been seller -- there have been a number of teachers that have been very supportive of the students; but there have been a number of teachers that were real slackers.

Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

Speaking of personal comments...

Yes, sir. Go right ahead.

MR. GUSTAS: Gerry Gustas, Fern Road. I couldn't read the slides, 'cause my eyesight's poor, but I don't have any slides of my own again. I'll need to bring them.

I find that the secondary amendment to be almost -- just, you know, an idea was -- was hatched about moving the money from one place to another, and it's -- and it's -- and it's illegal to Mass. law to do that. So we couldn't get our way. Let's just take the money away. There doesn't seem to be any real sense to that or any real focus to it.

I'm also -- I don't -- I don't often admit
this, but I'm also a former School Committee
member; and I've also put two children through
Andover public schools: One with special education
and one a typical student.

And, you know, I -- my son was
mainstreamed through the -- through the 8th grade;
and then we put him into a more vocational kind of
a setting; and he ran into an MCAS test in the
tenth grade in science, and he hadn't had any
science since the eighth grade in the mainstream
part of it; and he passed the MCAS -- passed it in
English, passed it in math; and he's got his high
school diploma.

And my daughter, who's the typical -- I
guess -- type student, 35 people applied to
Springfield College to a dual athletic
training/physical therapy degree program; and she
was one of five who was accepted.

So I have to tell you that to use the word
"poor" with Andover schools just rings false to me.
I think it's a -- an outstanding school system. I
think we've got some tremendously talented,
dedicated teachers; and I would recommend not just
taking the money away here, you know, 'cause the
first idea didn't pass; and so, you know, and then
let's just stick a finger in someone's eye. I
think that's a poor idea.

(Applause.)

DOCTOR AXELROD: Madam Moderator, may I respond?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, ma'am. Again,
thank you.

DOCTOR AXELROD: Dr. Jane Axelrod, 8
(inaudible) Ave. 60-year resident of Andover,
Massachusetts.

It seems like I'm sort of coming from two
bad towns -- below 60 percent Andover and former
12-year public school teacher in Chelmsford; 15
years in the university training teachers and
visiting many public high schools to watch my
students.

As I wrote in the Andover Townsman,
people -- many people, children in this school,
people in this town have very legitimate needs.
Who's to say which one is really more important
than the other? But we have to. But there is not
endless money in this town to meet all those needs.
And if I understand correctly, in 10 -- over a
10-year period, the budget -- the taxes rose 58 percent, while the average income earner's money rose 28 percent.

I would like to direct you -- actually, beforehand, there's no doubt in my mind, having watched teachers develop, grow in their classrooms over the past 40 years, I have met few teachers who aren't strongly dedicated to their work. Many have spent thankless hours with students. So I would have a hard time ever saying anything negative about someone who goes into the profession of teaching.

What I would have to say about the role of the union in collective bargaining might be quite different. So I would like to direct you -- so my hat is off to all public school teachers.

I would like to direct you to page 3 at the top, "Collective bargaining agreements are the largest single driver of the annual increases in town and school operating budgets."

That very last sentence, it says "The town's compensation costs are growing at an unsustainable rate."

Thank you for your time.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

MR. POKRESS: Madam Moderator, I would like to correct something that the gentleman said about my intentions.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Just one moment. I'll give you one minute to rebut, and then we will vote. Go right ahead, sir.

MR. POKRESS: Thank you. I'd like to correct, for the record -- my intentions, in fact, were originally put forward in the amendment to that I've asked people to vote in the affirmative on, but then I felt -- after giving it a lot of deliberation -- that, rather than asking the town to reduce the amount of spending, I would ask the town to at least direct that amount of money from noninstructional overhead staffing and into clear academic instructional and academic growth areas.

My intent was to put forward originally the -- the amendment that's before you now, primarily because -- as several people have said -- the most recent collective bargaining agreement that was hurried through by all but one member of the School Committee has saddled the town with a $2.4 million increase in expenses related to
teaching --

THE FLOOR: (Inaudible.)

MR. POKRESS: No, it's not out of order.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: One at a time.

MR. POKRESS: That was the motivation for
the amendment, sir. The motivation for my
amendment was related to an increase in spending
without any movement of the educational needle in
our school system to improve the quality of
education for our students. It gets to Mr. Howe's
point on the contract.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Mr.
Pokress. Thank you.

All right. We are going to vote now for
the amendment.

All those in favor?

We're not voting school budget. We're
voting the total number that it will be revised to
at $70,649,452, as stipulated.

All those in favor of the amendment of
making the change of the budget to that number,
please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?
The opposition clearly has it. The motion -- the amendment is lost.

So we're back now to 70,904,452.

All those in favor of the school budget line item 13 as moved, please raise one hand.

MR. DOVELAR: Excuse me. Is there any -- can we talk about this?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry?

MR. DOVELAR: Is there any discussion before the vote?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I did not see you there, sir. I'm sorry. I did not see you.

Go right ahead.

MR. DOVELAR: Thank you. Before we vote on the largest item in the budget --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir, can you identify yourself, please?

MR. DOVELAR: I'm sorry. My name is Roy Dovelar. I live at 8 Moreland Ave.

As Mr. Vispoli said in the beginning, that I guess he took a look at the proposed budget and saw that the necessary tax increase was going to be too much -- that some folks on our council decided that something needed to be done, because it -- it
just couldn't keep going up and up and up all the
time. And I understand -- and I appreciate that;
and I appreciate what he said about limiting the
tax increase by not taxing us an additional million
dollars that you could have.

So now our -- our taxes are going to only
go up $300 and something each instead of maybe
$400. Well, that's a good start. But I don't -- I
don't think we should go ahead with this vote
without thinking about a couple of things. And I
didn't write these things; they were in the
pamphlet or the booklet that was given to all of
us.

And it has to do with some things about
the school budget. Now, it states in here that
2013 and '14, there was basically no increase in
enrollment. And yet, over that period of time, 118
new full-time equivalents have been added to the
school system. And it goes on to talk about how 63
of these were approved in the budget, but there
were an additional 55, which got slipped in somehow
and were not approved in the budget.

But -- and he said -- and that someone --
I don't know who wrote this, but I congratulate
you -- "compounded contractual increases in
salaries and benefits now and in the future are
unsustainable."

Now, that's a very significant statement;
and that didn't come up in the broad presentation
in the beginning of the program here. But we're
looking at some unsustainable financial obligations
in this town. Nobody seems to be talking about
that.

My wife mentioned the other one on this
next page. It talks about the town's compensation
costs are growing at an unsustainable rate because
of the collective bargaining agreements -- which we
don't know anything about.

So one last thing I'd like to say; and
that is, this was perhaps the more -- even more
disturbing to me. Someone wrote on page 2 that --
regarding transparency -- the Finance Committee has
been unable to acquire timely and accurate
information to support the school's request for
increased spending.

What is that? One part of our governing
body is asking the school council for information
and they don't get it on time? I think that's
despicable; and whoever's responsible for that, you should be ashamed of yourself.

So I'm not going to propose an amendment, but I work in the private sector. I'm a businessman. We don't get automatic increases year after year, like people in government do. As a matter of fact, everyone I know in business is working harder and longer for less money --

(Applause.)

-- but apparently not here.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

MR. DOVELAR: One last thing is this --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Very short, please.

MR. DOVELAR: -- you're getting a $2 million increase in your budget, and you don't have the courtesy to give the Finance Committee an explanation of why. And I think that's shameful.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. We're going to vote the budget now.

All those in favor of line item 13 at 70,904,452, please raise one hand.

THE FLOOR: Can I -- hello?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry? We've already got to the vote, ma'am. I'm sorry.
All those in favor, please -- if you could please have a seat in the auditorium if you would like to vote.

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

The ayes clearly have it. The motion for the line item is carried.

Line item 14 and 15, Mr. Kowalski.

MR. KOWALSKI: Madam Moderator, I move line items 14 and 15, sewer, in the following amounts: 14, personal services, $301,400; 15, other expenses, $2,080,848, for a total of $2,382,248.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line item 14 and 15 have been moved in the amount of $2,382,248.

Mr. Kowalski?

MR. KOWALSKI: Board of Selectmen recommends approval, Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Any questions?
If you could please leave immediately and not talk in the aisles, that would be appreciated. If you could please clear that back aisle, election officers, I would be grateful so we can take a vote. Please move people along.

Mary, could you and whoever you're talking with please move along. Thank you. Not to single people out, but if I know who you are, I'm singling you out.

If you want to vote, please sit down now. Otherwise, your vote will not count.

All those in favor of line item 14 and 15, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

The ayes have it. The motion carries.

Line items 16 and 17, Mr. Major.

MR. MAJOR: Thank you, Madam Moderator. I move line items 16 and 17, water, in the following amounts: Line 16, personal services in the amount of $1,839,819; line item 17, other expenses, in the amount of $2,726,959, for a total appropriation of $4,566,778.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 16 and 17
have been moved in the amount of $4,566,778.

Mr. Major?

MR. MAJOR: The Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Stumpf?

MR. STUMPF: Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Yes, sir.

Could you turn on mic 3, please.

MR. LANDRY: Bob Landry, Seminole Circle.

I have an amendment to go against this article or against this motion --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead, sir.

MR. LANDRY: To amend Article 4, Town Meeting fiscal year 2015 operating budget, line item 17, reducing it by $231,704 from the budget request of $2,726 -- 2,7 --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Say that number slowly, please. 2 million what?

MR. LANDRY: 2,726,959 to 2,495,255.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Could we have copies of that, please?

MR. LANDRY: Yes.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Mr. Barry.
You're catching on.
MR. LANDRY: I have some slides for this, please.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Hold on one second, please.
MR. LANDRY: Yeah.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: You're amending No. 17 --
MR. LANDRY: That's right.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: -- only.
MR. LANDRY: Only.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Go right ahead.
MR. LANDRY: Okay. I -- this actually has nothing to do with the water and sewer budget per se. It's simply monies that have been put into the water and sewer budget that relates to the amendment that I'd like to make.
So if I could, I have a -- just a few slides that I want to go through. This is really to talk about --
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Landry, I'm sorry. I'm having a very hard time hearing you. Could you move the mic up? Thank you.
MR. LANDRY: Is that better?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: It's much better.

Thank you.

MR. LANDRY: Okay. Thank you.

That is the wrong one. That is coming out.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Stay tuned...

MR. LANDRY: Okay. That's good.

Any chance -- can we get that up on the big screen as well just so people can see that?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I think we -- I think we want to keep you up on the big screen. Thank you.

MR. LANDRY: Okay. All right.

Well, first of all, if I -- if I may, just one personal point of privilege. The only reason I'm standing here tonight is because of a very nice man and a good friend, Greg Rigby, who passed away unexpectedly in February. Greg was a great friend, a good man, and a great public servant as a former member of the Finance Committee. And he was a great -- gave great service to the residents of Andover. And I just want to recognize his memory.

(Applause.)
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead.

MR. LANDRY: Madam Moderator, thank you very much.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: That's okay.

MR. LANDRY: This is the water and sewer budget. And, again, this has nothing to do with water and sewer. It's just that OPEB -- which has come up several times tonight -- is actually spread throughout the -- the evening in these various articles. And the first time it comes up is right here.

So in the interest of time, I decided to omit the -- any amendments line -- you know, the 37,000, just focus on the large one, 'cause I think we can make a point here.

But the bottom line is, I just want -- I think we need to talk about OPEB; and I think the -- this is all part of a funding plan that I think is premature; and hopefully I can convince you of that inside of three minutes.

Next slide, please. Okay.

We have -- OPEB comes up in this form quite a bit, but we never really talk about what it is -- just definition -- other post employment
benefits -- which, primarily, is retiree health insurance.

And on the surface that sounds fine. That sounds like, you know, offering some supplemental benefits to, perhaps, retirees that have, you know, put in their 30 years or so with the town; and you would think that's pretty reasonable.

If you go to the next slide you'll see what the actual benefit is. If you work for the Town of Andover for as few as 20 hours a week and an accumulate just 10 years of service, you and your surviving spouse will receive generous subsidized health insurance benefits for the rest of your life beginning at age 55.

(Applause.)

I guess if you have the job you would be clapping. For the rest of us, it's not -- we have to pay for it.

This benefit here -- a very generous, I think, unnecessarily generous benefit -- has been promised for many, many years, but not paid for. And only recently were we required to recognize the size of this liability. Now, you've heard this number -- $145 million based on the most recent
assessment.

You also heard questions very early on that say that this number is actually probably very much understated, based upon the assumptions that are used to come up with that.

So we have a $145 million unfunded liability. Think about that. A liability well in excess of things that you typically seek approval for -- like schools and things of that nature.

And how much have we set aside? $1.5 million, all within the last few years, and all because we were forced to recognize this liability and at least start putting a little money towards it. And so we've got a long way to go this is a very deep hole that we're in.

Because of that deep hole -- that underfunded liability -- the Board of Selectmen asked the Town Manager to come up with a plan to deal with it.

So what I'd like to do is just walk you very quickly through the Town Manager's plan and tell you why I think we should not approve it.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Landry, you've got another 30 seconds --
MR. LANDRY: Well, Madam Moderator --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: -- on this --

MR. LANDRY: This is spread across several articles. I can keep coming back if I --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Wait a minute. Wait a minute, please. On this line item you've got another 30 seconds.

MR. LANDRY: And, Madam Moderator --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I need to ask you a question, if I may.

MR. LANDRY: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: What are you thinking you need?

MR. LANDRY: I -- I just need a few minutes to finish up the rest of these slides. It won't take long. I promise you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I will give you another three minutes. Go right ahead, sir.

MR. LANDRY: Madam Moderator, if I may, may I ask a question?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir, you've got another three minutes. Go right ahead.

MR. LANDRY: Citizens of this town are only given a few minutes at this microphone. Now,
I'm trying to save taxpayers a 1.3 million here; and I only have three minutes to do it. I beg your indulgence for just a minute.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: You have -- you will have had six minutes. You have another three minutes based on the vote at this meeting prior to the start. Go right ahead, sir.

MR. LANDRY: Okay. The -- the Town Manager's plan, as you can see, retired teachers teachers, we did that. We asked our own retirement board to adjust service credit for part-time employees. That, in my understanding, was rejected. There's a reform bill at the house at the state level that's facing major opposition -- nothing there in sight; and the other strategy to work with employees to cut health insurance costs -- well, wait till you get to health insurance, and you'll see how well that's going.

Next slide. OPEB funding; we already talked about this. This is what the Town Manager is recommending 1.6 million. This is about 1.3 million more than what we're doing right now. So, please, pay attention. This is 1.3 million more the Town Manager's going to ask you for over the
course of the next few articles. Next, please.

   This is my closing argument; and this

   is -- I'll have to come back to it if I can't do

   it. This is one of my favorite quotes, and I think

   it's appropriate: "If you find yourself in a hole,

   you stop digging."

   Next slide. Our liability's a big number.

   It may be understated. There's no foreseeable

   changes right now to these eligibility

   guidelines -- 20 hours a week, 10 years of service,

   benefits beginning at age 55.

   Next slide. The Town Manager's plan only

   calls for Andover taxpayers to fill this hole.

   Shouldn't employees contribute to their future

   retirement benefit while employed, as they do with

   pension benefits? And even in the finance book,

   the FINCOM book, it says "Note that even the

   proposed funding in the OPEB trust, liability

   continued to increase and a substantial liability

   will remain 20 to 30 years.

   Next conclusion: Stop the digging. OPEB

   is a national problem. It's going to require a

   federal and a state remedy. It makes no sense to

   shovel more taxpayer monies into this OPEB hole
until the system is significantly reformed.

    Please vote yes for this amendment.

    (Applause.)

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Let's -- let's start

here and go around as we need to.

    Thank you. If you could identify

yourself.

    MR. GUSTAS: Gerry Gustas, Fern Road.

    The only thing I'd say to this is that I
prefer to see -- you know, the numbers that Bob
puts up are persuasive and thought out, but I'd
prefer to see this not tackled at a Town Meeting
with a six-minute presentation and a two-minute,
you know, con and another 3 minute pro; and then we
all go like this (indicating) or don't go like
that, based on what we really don't know. I think
this is, you know, the Town Manager's and
Selectmen's -- you know, and I think they know it
it's their -- it's job one.

    And this is a huge hole. And the -- you
know, there is now mandates from the -- from the
state government that, you know, we will dig
ourselves out of this hole. The employees that
we're now looking at to -- to fund the liability
have worked for the town, and this -- this benefit
is part of the compensation. They could have done
a number of other things with their lives and made
more money. But they didn't.

They worked for the town; and part of the
deal was this was part of the compensation.

(Applause.)

MR. GUSTAS: And I think it's unfair in a
Town Meeting kind of format -- forum, to just flash
up a quick vote and take this away, without a lot
more discussion at the FINCOM and Selectmen level.

Like I say, they talk about it all the
time -- if you read the funny papers. So, you
know, we can all go down to their meetings and --
and be heard there; and that's where I really think
this needs to be -- this needs to be settled.

Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

Yes, sir.

THE FLOOR: (Inaudible) from Holt Road.

I would like to move the question.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Can we give this
another -- a couple of -- we'd like to get a note
from the -- word from the Selectmen on this and one
other individual.

THE FLOOR: I'll come back in a couple and move it in a few -- in a few presentations.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Thank you. Go right ahead, sir.

MR. ARAI: Hello. My name's Max Arai from County Road; and I'm speaking out in favor of this amendment, because I think that this has been an ongoing problem. So the OPEB liability has been growing steadily over the last 10 years. And there really is not very much willingness in the town government for having a truly balanced budget.

So if you look at the graph on page 21 in the book, you'll see that the current plans call for allowing this liability to more than double. It will be somewhere in the 3 to 400 million range by the end of that graph. And so, as it says on page 3, this is not a sustainable path.

So the importance of this amendment is less about whether it passes today -- because there doesn't seem to be much appetite for passing these amendments -- but to raise awareness of the fact that our budgets are far from balanced.

So if you look at the documents from the
accountants with regard to the OPEB, there's something called an "annual required contribution," which, for OPEB, would be a $11.6 million item, which -- and if -- and it's spread out in little dribs and drabs throughout this budget.

So it's a little hard for people who aren't paying a lot of attention to actually add it all up. But when I you get to the bottom line, this budget is about $4 and a half million short of what it needs to be in order to fully fund these liabilities.

Now, what we don't want is Andover to be like Detroit, where eventually we have to default on these things. But, you know, if you have -- if you're incurring ever-increasing debts or liabilities, and you have no plan to address it, eventually that will catch up with you.

And, you know, the question is, who's going to eat it? Is it going to be the town taxpayers? Or is it going to be the employers? Or some mix of that?

So I -- I think you should consider this amendment; and more importantly, should pay attention to the fact that this budget is far from
balanced.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.

Mr. Major?

MR. MAJOR: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Moderator. Folks, this is a very important issue, and this is an issue that we have been talking about with you over the last five years.

As the Town Manager had highlighted earlier, we had an actuary report done in 2009; and, indeed, this is an issue across the entire nation. So every community in Massachusetts and -- and the communities across the nation are dealing with this.

Now, you can either put your head in the sand and -- and hope that it goes away and that there's a magic pill that happens in the future, or we can do something about it.

And this Town Meeting over the last five years has allowed us to start putting money into a trust fund; and it's called the OPEB trust fund. So we're putting the money aside. We're not just spending it haphazardly. And the intent is, this is a long-term liability. And it's a liability for the health insurance costs that we will incur for
each of our employees over time as they retire, etcetera.

And so just a little bit of history: We identified what this looked like five years ago; four years ago we set up the trust fund -- with your permission -- with your vote -- and we contributed $250,000 to it.

Now, when you're talking hundreds of millions of dollars, that's a small amount of money. But it's a start. And up to this point in time -- up through last year's Town Meeting, we did contribute $1.5 million into this trust fund. And we told you that the Town Manager was putting together a long-term plan. He presented that plan to the boards -- the three boards in the town; and the Board of Selectmen accepted that plan; and part of that plan we're driving tonight.

We've got $1.67 million -- so nearly 1.7 million that we're hoping to appropriate to put into that account. 1 million of it comes from our cash reserves. We've got 400,000 that came from Article 4 that we're trying to an appropriate; and we've got $260,000 that's coming from water and sewer; and that's what we're talking about right
now.

One other point to this: We get rated -- the Town of Andover gets rated by private agencies. And S&P has taken a look at Andover, and they've continued to give us Triple A bond rating. That's the highest rating that you can get from a financial institution. And this is an independent financial institution.

And one of the things that they call out in this report that I have in my hands is the aggressive nature that we're going after to fund this OPEB liability and to be able to put this money aside. Again, we're not spending it. We're taking the money, and we're putting it into this cash reserve account with the specific purpose that that will cover our long-term liabilities for years to come.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Are you ready to vote on this amendment?

THE FLOOR: Yeah.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: All right. Let's go. All those in favor of reducing line item 17 -- Mr. Landry make sure I'm saying this correct for you, please -- line item 17 to the amount of
$2,495,255 -- all those in favor of that amendment, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

All those opposed?

The opposition clearly has it. The motion is lost.

Line item 16 and 17 have been moved and seconded in the amount of $4,555 -- I'm sorry; $4,566,778.

Any question or discussion?

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

The ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Is Mr. Lavoie here? Mr. Lavoie, how are you today? Welcome.

MS. CARBONE: Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Who's calling? Yes, Mary.

MS. CARBONE: I would like to speak.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: We've got a motion coming up.

MS. CARBONE: I know what you have. I would like to speak in general -- presentation.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Is it a point of order, Mary?

MRS. CARBONE: Yes.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: What's your point of order, please?

MRS. CARBONE: Excuse me. Is this microphone on?

My name is Mary Carbone, Cyr Circle. I am clearly offended and taken aback by what I see transpiring at this Town Meeting. I have given my time freely --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mary, what is your point of order, please?

MRS. CARBONE: If you let me speak, I'll tell you what it is.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I want to hear what the point of order is.

MRS. CARBONE: The point of order is what I am seeing going on at this Town Meeting. That's what my point of order is.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Do you feel it's illegal?

MRS. CARBONE: I wouldn't categorize it as illegal. It's offensive. It's offensive.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: All right.

MRS. CARBONE: The bottom line is you have residents of this community who you clearly tell continually to attend Town Meeting. They come to Town Meeting, once they get what they want, they're gone. I have attended meetings in this town since 1979. I know what's going on in this community -- not everybody knows. I do, because I want to be educated about my government. And that's the bottom line.

People that have problems here should be allowed to speak, whether you like it or not -- and this is not to offend you, as a Moderator; it's to clearly address an issue that's -- you can clearly see what's going on.

Some educated people want to speak. And they want to educate you on certain things, but you won't allow it. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Mary.

Mr. Lavoie, go right ahead.

MR. LAVOIE: John Lavoie, 30 Foster Circle, superintendent, director at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Welcome.
MR. LAVOIE: Thank you. Madam Moderator, I move line item 18 technical schools in the following amount: $528,842, of which $339,248 would go to Greater Lawrence Technical School; and $189,594 to Essex Aggie.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Line item 18 has been moved in the amount of $528,842. Mr. Salafia, please? If I can get the board reports first, please.

Mr. Salafia?

MR. SALAFIA: Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

MR. SALAFIA: The Board of Selectmen recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Mr. Stumpf.

MR. STUMPF: The Finance Committee recommends approval.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Mr. Birnbach?

MR. BIRNBACH: Yeah. Sure. Can -- can you comment on how many students we currently have
from Andover attending both of those programs?

Folks have been asking and we're trying to get the right numbers.

MR. LAVOIE: At Greater Lawrence Technical School, we have 13 -- excuse me 17; and at Essex aggie, I'm not sure what their number is.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Nine, I'm being told.

They're nine. Okay.

Any other questions?

MR. PASQUALE: John Pasquale, 47-B Whittier Street. The numbers say we're going up about $200,000, yet we've only got about 30 students. So I'd like to take a minute to explain to me what the heck do we have to spend $200,000 for at the technical school, or is that a mandated amount that Andover has to pay? Because that's a staggering increase over the past few years.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Lavoie, do you have the answer to that?

MR. LAVOIE: Madam Moderator, our budget from last year went up approximately $20,000. The increase you're seeing from last year did not include Essex Aggie in that number.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Does that clarify it John?

MR. PASQUALE: Well, that only provokes another question.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Of course it does.

MR. PASQUALE: Of the amount, what's the split going to the technical school; what now are we taking on with Essex Aggie?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: He did give us that number. 339,248 is going to the technical school. $189,594 is going to Essex Aggie. There's a difference between 17 students at the technical school and nine students at Essex Aggie.

Any other questions?

MR. PASQUALE: No. I just drove by Essex Aggie. They're building this campus over there, so are we going to get more money coming out of Andover to fund that building over there?

MR. STUMPF: Madam Moderator.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir.

MR. STUMPF: Buzz, perhaps you can weigh in on this as well, but Mr. Pasquale, as you know, the state charges us an assessment for a number of things. The one we talked about previously was for
retired teachers. It's the single largest dollar amount, and those assessments from the state are factored into our budget preparation process, but they're not appropriated at Town Meeting. They simply are the state giveth and the state taketh away.

Well, this is one -- and Buzz, correct me if I'm wrong -- but the school that the -- the aggie school -- used to be part of the state assessment that was charged.

And if you look in the expenditure page on page 43, you'll see that last year it was $573,000 for other assessments; and this year it's 413,000. So the assessment has gone down, and the appropriation has gone up because it's now included in Article 4.

Is that accurate, Buzz?

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Yes. Mr. Stumpf, that is accurate.

MR. STUMPF: You don't have to elaborate any more. We've got to get out of here at 10 o'clock.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. Line item 18 in
the amount of $528,842, all those in favor, please raise one hand? Thank you.

Those opposed? The ayes have it the motion carries.

Mr. Salafia?

MR. SALAFIA: Yes. Madam Moderator, I move line items 19 through 24, fixed expenses in the following amounts. Line item 19, debt service $14,998,239; line item 20, general insurance, $714,686; line item 21, unemployment compensation of $320,000; line item 22, retirement fund, $6,412,115; Item 23, health insurance fund: $15,670,957; 24 -- line item 24, OPEB fund $400,000, for a total of $38,515,997, which includes $336,638 from the cable fund.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Line items 19 through 24 have been moved and seconded in the amount of $38,515,997.

Mr. Landry?

MR. LANDRY: Madam Moderator, Bob Landry, Seminole Circle. I move to amend line 23, health insurance. In the interest of time, I gave you my amendments before I had a chance to read them. So maybe you can just read it, and I can affirm.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you -- go ahead.

Go ahead.

MR. LANDRY: I'm sorry. Madam Moderator,
I brought you the copies before I could read it to
try to save time.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Oh, you don't have it?

MR. LANDRY: Yeah. I don't have a copy.
Could you please read it?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I'm sorry. Line item
23, reducing it by $680,000 from the budget request
of 5 -- 15,670,957 to 14,990,957. That's on line
item 23 for the health insurance fund.

MR. LANDRY: That's right; and this -- may
I speak to the amendment now?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: You may.

MR. LANDRY: Okay. Great. Thank you.
This is going to take less than three
minutes, 'cause I'm going to skip a few slides to
get to the point. We're here to talk about health
insurance, because if you can see that big red
slice of the pie up there, it's 10 percent of the
entire budget. We spend more on health insurance
for our employees than we spend on the Mr.
President and the fire department combined. Go to
slide 4 please; we'll skip over a few just get
right to the point.

This year -- last year I was really
pushing, because our health insurance -- 10 percent
of the budget hadn't been out to bid for five years
-- between the years of 2008 and 2013, which is
just outrageous and you never see in the private
sector. It finally went out to bid been, and guess
what results we got? Tufts Health Plan -- but an
unbelievable proposal on the table. Tufts Health
Plan -- most of you probably know -- nationally
ranked insurer. They matched or improved the
benefits being offered; they have a very strong
doctor and hospital network.

Next slide, please.

And what's not to like? A million dollars
in annual savings; 680,000 to Andover taxpayers --
which is the amount of my amendment -- and $320,000
approximately would have went to town employees.
There was nothing not to like until -- and last
week, when we heard that it was declined by a group
called the public employee committee --
representatives of the town's unions; they rejected
this deal, but it wasn't until the Eagle Tribune
released an article over the weekend on Saturday
that we learned a little bit more about what
happened.

Please, the next slide.

"Led by the teachers, and over the
objections of some town workers, a committee made
up of representatives of 14 municipal employee
unions rejected a health insurance plan this week
that would have saved taxpayers close to a million
dollars."

Now, I have additional slides here, but I
think they're being disallowed, because they are
quotes from the article -- and nothing more -- but
I believe because they quote a resident who may not
be here, it's not allowed to be shown; is that
correct?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Correct.

If I can, any quotes that are used --
whether video or written -- if this person who is
making a statement -- if the person is not here for
the meeting to either ask questions of or with
their permission, I will disallow it. So -- but go
right ahead with your presentation.

MR. LANDRY: And that is fine. For those
of you that read the article, you know exactly what
I'm talking about anyways.

Okay. If we go to the final slide here, what this amendment achieves? It shows that we reject this outcome; that we have an opportunity to save a million bucks and shared between taxpayers and the employees, and it gets rejected -- as you would have read in the article -- by a -- what appears to be the single vote of a single union representative or representative of a single body of union employees.

This amendment cuts $680,000. That's the taxpayer's share of savings. I don't think we, as taxpayers, should be collateral damage in these kind of battles. We should be able to get the savings that comes out of going to a bid and having an insurer respond to the RFP specifications.

And before we close out -- before I ask you to vote for this amendment, I'd like to let me now that I, with permission of the town last week, I called Tufts Health Plan -- I'm a broker in the private sector; I do business with them -- and in full disclosure, I have no financial interest in the outcome of this amendment -- just to be clear.
I spoke with Tufts Health Plan late last week. They are willing to stand by their offer -- with or without the teachers. I think it is time to do something in this town.

Vote for this amendment. Send the leadership back to the drawing board and go talk to whoever voted against this and make this happen.

Please vote for this amendment.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Urbelis. Mr. Urbelis, please.

MR. URBELIS: Thank you, Madam Moderator.

With regard to this particular line item, in anticipation of a motion to reduce it -- such as has been requested here -- we asked the town's labor counsel, Philip Collins, for an opinion, which we received today; and I'll go ahead and read it to you right now. This is from Phil Collins, town's labor counsel.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: They can't hear you, Tom.

THE FLOOR: Can't hear.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: People back here are telling me they can't. Go ahead.
MR. URBELIS: Okay.

THE FLOOR: No, not here. You have -- "Buzz, you have asked our office --"

THE FLOOR: (Inaudible)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: The meeting will come to order, please. Go ahead, Mr. Urbelis.

MR. URBELIS: Here's the memo from the --

MR. LANDRY: Point of order -- point of order, Madam Moderator. I think the questions are coming in -- if we could just clarify -- does this meet the same criteria? Is this person a resident of Andover who's not here?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: This is the legal opinion that --

MR. URBELIS: This is a person that we pay a lot of money to.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: This is the legal opinion of --

MR. LANDRY: I just want to make sure it's being consistent. That's what the questions are. I just want to make sure we answer the question.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: This is a legal opinion that was sought by Town Counsel to advise the Town Meeting. I will allow it.

MR. URBELIS: Okay.

"You have asked our office for a legal opinion on the matter of whether Town Meeting can legally adopt a budget which contains insufficient appropriations for payment of the town's share of employees' health and related insurance. The appropriation is being sought to fund the cost items contained in the third year of a coalition agreement entered into pursuant to the Health Insurance Reform Statute of 2011.

"Given prior years' funding of those benefits under that multiyear agreement, those benefits are enforceable as a matter of law. Moreover, the matter of funding health insurance benefits for municipal employees is specifically governed by a provision of Mass. General Laws 32(b), Section 3 which provides in pertinent part as follows: 'If a town which has accepted the provisions of section 10, accepts any other section of this chapter, but fails to appropriate the funds necessary to implement said provisions, the Selectmen shall certify the cost to the town in carrying out the provisions of this chapter to the
board of assessors, who shall include the amount so
certified and the determination of the tax rate of
that year.'"

He continues on: "Obviously the
legislative purpose of this long-standing provision
of law is to discourage any effort to underfund the
town's share of municipal health insurance
benefits. This conclusion is reinforced by the
opinion letter of the division of local services of
the Massachusetts Department of Revenue regarding a
group insurance deficit in the Town of Groveland.
After citing the above-referenced language, the
opinion letter reached the following conclusion:
"Since the town's share of group health insurance
cost must be raised as a tax rate if the
appropriation is inadequate, the town has an
obligation to pay such costs, notwithstanding the
absence of sufficient appropriations," end quote.

And he concludes with the following:
"Accordingly, any motion to underfund the town's
request for sufficient appropriations will be of no
force or effect."

MR. LANDRY: Madam Moderator, may I
respond to that?
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead.

MR. LANDRY: My first response is a simple one, which is, why are you even putting it up for a vote if we can't even approve it or amend it? Why is it even up for a vote?

Maybe we ought to save time and take all the things out of the budget that are not subject to a vote and do that. And by the way, I think we will have enough money, because if this amendment is approved, it will cut the funds -- if that's one opinion, there may be others. I think we ought to cut this budget. You want things to happen in town?

Cut this budget, force them to go back; Tufts Health Plan is ready to offer the deal, and do something right for a change, instead of just following all these laws that are designed to serve the interest of everyone except the taxpayers.

(Applause.)

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Town Manager?

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: The town entered into a three-year agreement with the PEC, the public employees committee. I went to them and asked for an amendment for the final year -- that's fiscal
'15 upcoming that we're voting on tonight.

I have a three-year agreement. It started in fiscal '13, '14, the year we're in now; and I asked for an amendment for '15 to consider an alternative to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield program. That amendment was not approved in accordance with the rules and regulations of the PEC agreement.

Now, we entered into PEC for a specific reason. We entered into PEC to change plan design. When the legislature, in their infinite wisdom, created insurance reform, I recommended to the Selectmen that we take advantage of it; and they did. And we've saved you money over the years. Don't be misled.

MR. LANDRY: That is not true. That is not true.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: That's true, and I can prove it. And you know it, Mr. Landry. As an insurance agent, you know it.

MR. LANDRY: I do not agree -- I do not agree with that statement, and I'd like to respond to that, if I could.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: I'm not going to let
you --

MR. LANDRY: This is the kind of debate we need on this --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Landry, let him finish, and I will give you the opportunity to speak.

MR. LANDRY: Fine.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: All right. We are in a legal contract environment. This is not a renegade take-Town-Meeting-by-storm --

MR. LANDRY: Then why did you put it up for a vote? Why are you creating the illusion of democracy?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. Landry. Mr. Landry, please let him finish.

MR. LANDRY: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: I have a legal requirement, as the Selectmen, School Committee, if there's a bill to pay, if there is a contract to honor -- whether it's for trash, whether it's for recycling, whether it's for school buses, whether it's for health insurance -- it has to be appropriated. That is why we are here. It's an
appropriation of the town.

MR. LANDRY: Fine.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: But that's not what I want to address.

What I want to address is that we took advantage of the PEC. We took advantage of the insurance reform legislation; and we took advantage because we were able to change plan design to the benchmark of the GIC program. The legislation said that we could go to the most popular of the GIC programs -- which happens to be the Tufts Navigator plan.

MR. LANDRY: We're not -- I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: We did that. We negotiated that plan.

MR. LANDRY: Mr. Town Manager, I'm sorry. We don't need to revisit that history.

MR. STAPCZYNSKI: Let me finish, please.

Thank you, sir.

We negotiated that, and we saved the town a million dollars the first year. Don't forget that. And our increases over the past years have been very modest -- modest indeed. And we've taken
advantage of that, and I have the slide that shows
-- I showed it earlier -- when we brought the
retired teachers back into the plan, the Selectmen
-- my recommendation, was to bring them in July 1.

The Selectmen, after hearing from the
entire teachers, decided to do it September 1.
We're still saving $209,000 this year. I showed
this slide earlier. That is a direct savings to
the taxpayers of this town, sir. Thank you.

MR. LANDRY: Thank you, Mr. Town Manager,
but I do need to respond.

If you want to bring up the last few
years, but let's go back a little bit further,
because when we weren't going out to bid for five
years, we were blowing money left and right.

We were getting increases that we weren't
even challenging by going to the competitive
marketplace like every our company does in the
private sector. So if you want to go back we can
go back as far as you like.

Let me just respond in this final way:
The Town Manager has had his say. The teachers
union have clearly had their say. It's time for us
to have our say; and that's what this meeting is
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, Mr. Landry.
Yes, sir. Right down here.
Mic No. 1, please. Mic No. 1.
MR. HINDIN: Thank you, Madam Moderator.
Am I turned up? Great.
My name is Robert Hindin. I have lived in this town with my wife for 30 years.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Your address -- your address, please?
MR. HINDIN: I'm sorry?
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Your address?
MR. HINDIN: I'm sorry. Wedgewood Drive.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.
MR. HINDIN: I'm somewhat embarrassed to say that this is the first time that I have attended Town Meeting in 30 years. I wrongfully thought that Andover was a well-run town, raised a family here. So what -- people might ask -- changed after 30 years?
What changed was that last Thursday my wife handed me the Andover Townsman; and the Andover Townsman had an interview with Mr. Landry; Andover Townsman talked a little bit about this
Town Meeting. And, frankly, I was pretty shocked by what I heard.

I spent the rest of the weekend researching the issues, and what I've come to believe as a result is that this town management is not representing the interests of the town. They may be representing their own self interest. They may be representing other special interest, but they're not -- but they're not representing the interests of the town.

When we moved in, we had a tax --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir, I'm going to ask you to speak to the amendment that we've got before us to lower this line item. Please.

MR. HINDIN: Yes. Right.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: And anyone speaking behind you, please stay to the item at hand. Thank you.

MR. HINDIN: As Mr. Landry has said -- I'm sorry, Madam Moderator. I'm trying to give some background as to why I'm speaking.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: I understand. You do understand the hour, and people are weary. So if you could stay to the issue on this amendment.
MR. HINDIN: Well, certainly I can see that you're weary. The Town Moderator --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Sir.

MR. HINDIN: The Town Moderator, the Finance Committee, the Selectmen, the School Committee have done a very nice patting themselves on the back. We talked about --

THE FLOOR: Madam Moderator, point of order.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Can you please -- please.

MR. HINDIN: We've heard how there were actuarial assessments and how actuarial assessments make this town look great, how they've lowered the OPEB.

The way that we have lowered things -- if you look at the -- the unfunded liability and trust, we're at $150 million of unfunded expenses right now. The motion is intended to cut into that.

By the plan that the Finance Committee has presented, in 27 years we'll be at $350 million of unfunded assessment. Unless we do something to get this under control, that is optimistic. We could
be as high as 6 or $700 million of unfunded assessment. And I think that's what this motion is trying to address, reducing our exposure. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you, sir.

THE FLOOR: Madam Moderator, may I -- may I move the question?

MR. LANDRY: Is that pointing at me, Madam Moderator?

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Well, I've got a motion to -- I've got a motion to move the question.

MR. LANDRY: Okay.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Let's give two minutes to two more people.

You know, you've all had your say. Let them. So you've got --

THE FLOOR: I'll come back in two.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Two minutes total.

Thank you, sir. Go right ahead.

MR. COTICCHIO: Madam Moderator, my name is --

MODERATOR DOHERTY: If you could keep your comments as brief as possible and to this issue
only, or I'm going to stop you.

    MR. COTICCHIO: Yeah. They'll only be on this issue.

    MODERATOR DOHERTY: Go right ahead.

    MR. COTICCHIO: Madam Moderator, my name is Jimmy Coticchio. I am -- by way of full disclosure -- I'm a town employee. I'm chairman of the retirement board. I was former chairman of the housing authority. I've been coming to Town Meeting since I was basically allowed to. I've lived here my whole life; and my family's been here for 90 years. I think that's as much disclosure as I need to give you.

    The issue Mr. Landry brought forward relative to the PEC and a disagreement amongst the employees, there was a disagreement amongst the employees. We met the -- the committees met; and they came up with this particular plan.

    This plan saved the town a great deal of money. It was at the employees' request that this be done. They evaluated both plans; and the firefighters -- of which I am one -- wanted another plan. We wanted the Tufts plan; and that is -- may sound like Mr. Landry and I are on the same page.
We are not.

The PEC decided that they would go with Blue Cross Blue Shield. There were reasons for that. One of the reasons was that Blue Cross was giving a guarantee in the second year. There is no guarantee in the Tufts plan. And the committee decided that it wasn't worth the risk. I disagreed with that. But at the end of the day, both plans were evaluated, the savings was evaluated; and the risk was evaluated; and this was the best way to save the town money.

The employees are not trying to just spend money haphazardly. I live in this town. I work for this town. And I pay a great deal of taxes in this town -- just like everybody else here.

So I'm trying -- I'm tired of people trying to suggest that we are just here to reap these wonderful benefits. I'm here to work for you, to provide the best possible service that we can, and to continually improve that service. And hopefully, in return, I enjoy a good quality of life.

I ask you to vote down this amendment and let's get this done tonight.
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you.  
(Applause.)
MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mic No. 1, please.

Mic No. 1.
MS. McREAVY: Thank you, Madam Moderator.
My name is Susan McReavy, No. 8 Dean Circle. I'm a third generation of the Middleton family raising my family here in town. I'm a member of an extensive family of educators across the Commonwealth; and with my husband David, the parent of Sanborn elementary student and avid supporters of our teachers in the Andover public schools.

I am here to express my support for this amendment, because the recent health insurance decision appears to me to have been driven by the teacher union leadership; and it's fiscally unsound; and one might possibly conclude an act of retribution.

I too was unhappy about the additional cuts to the school budget, the timing of these cuts, and the consequences of these cuts to our teaching staff and, therefore, our children.

But as the saying goes, two wrongs don't make a right. I thank you, Mr. Eric Teichert and
the members of the firefighters union, as well as members of the other town unions who thoughtfully and collaboratively considered our community as a whole when evaluating the health insurance options and made responsible decisions -- as we all must do within our families where finances are concerned.

I call upon our residents to support this amendment, our town leaders to rectify the situation, and the teachers union leadership to walk the walk of the APS vision and mission by modeling responsible citizenship, engaging in community partnership, and contributing to the achievement of fiscal stability with fiscal responsibility. Thank you.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Thank you. Very quickly.

(Applause.)

Two minutes, then we'll vote.

MS. SPIEGEL: I'm Betsy Spiegel, 30 Michael Way. I was also part of the PEC committee, but I asked even though she's not a resident of the town of Andover, I would like Kerry Costello, president of the Andover Education Association to be able to address this. This was a long, hard
decision; and I think we need to hear her.

Mr. Fahey spoke; and he's not a resident.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Mr. who spoke?

MS. SPIEGEL: Mr. Fahey spoke previously to another issue.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Yes, sir. I've got a -- before I allow that, I've got a motion to move the question, which has to be approved by all of you. If you would like to keep discussion going, we will.

All those in favor of ending discussion now, please raise one hand.

Those opposed?

The ayes clearly have it. We will move the -- we will close the discussion. And we will move to the question.

We are moving on the amendment on line item 23 to amend that total number to $14,990,957. Just that one line item.

All those in favor of that amendment, please raise one hand.

Thank you.

Those opposed?

I'm sorry to do this to you, but I need to
take a count. I can't tell.

All those in favor of the amendment, please stand.

Once your row has been counted, please sit down.

If you could please stay in your seats and not leave until after this vote is done, I would be grateful -- just because of the confusion. We'll be done this vote in just a few minutes.

COUNTER: Section 1, please.

THE FLOOR: Section 1, 12.

COUNTER: 12.

Section 2.

THE FLOOR: Section 2, 27, 2-7.

COUNTER: 27.

Section 3?

THE FLOOR: Section 3, four.

COUNTER: Four.

Section 4?

THE FLOOR: Section 4, 53, 5-3.

COUNTER: 53.

Section 5, please?

THE FLOOR: Section 5, 30.

COUNTER: 3-0, 30.
Section 6?

THE FLOOR: Section 6 has 35, 3-5.

COUNTER: 35.

Section 7?

THE FLOOR: Section 7, 10, 1-0.

COUNTER: 10.

Section 8, any voters?

THE FLOOR: Section 8, zero.

COUNTER: Zero votes. And the hall? I used to say Bobby, it's now Charlie.

CHARLIE: Three.

COUNTER: Three. And the stage, please?

THE FLOOR: Four.

COUNTER: The stage is four.

And there's eight, nine, 10, 11 -- and 12 is the cafeteria, and it's empty.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: All right. All those opposed, please stand.

COUNTER: Keep looking for your counters. Please and sit. It makes it a lot easier for them and much faster.

Look to your left for the counter at section 4. She's trying to get you to sit down.

Well done.
Section 1, please?

THE FLOOR:  Section 1, 15.

COUNTER:  1–5, 15.

Section 2.

THE FLOOR:  Section 2, 40, 4–0.

COUNTER:  4–0.

Section 3.

THE FLOOR:  Section 3, 15, 1–5.

COUNTER:  15.

Section 4.

THE FLOOR:  Section 4, 29, 2–9.

COUNTER:  29.

Section 5, please.

THE FLOOR:  Section 5, 22.

COUNTER:  22.

Section 6.

THE FLOOR:  Section 6 has 29, 2–9.

COUNTER:  29.

7?

THE FLOOR:  17.

COUNTER:  7 has seven.

THE FLOOR:  Section 7, 17, 1–7.

COUNTER:  17, 1–7.

Okay. Section 8, any voters?
THE FLOOR: Section 8, four.
COUNTER: Four.

And the downstairs hall, Charlie?

THE FLOOR: Zero.
COUNTER: Zero.

On the stage?

THE FLOOR: 16.
COUNTER: 1-6 on the stage.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: Okay. 178 having voted in the affirmative, 187 voting against. The motion is lost.

Is there a — so we have a line items 19 through 24 in the amount of $38,515,997 as moved.

All those in favor, please raise one hand.

Those opposed?

Thank you. The ayes have it. The motion passes.

For information purposes only, we have passed a budget tonight in Article 4 of $152,890,226.

I will not start another article at this point in time.

Mr. Urbelis.

MR. URBELIS: Madam Moderator, I move to
adjourn this Town Meeting till 7 o'clock tomorrow night, same place.

MODERATOR DOHERTY: There's a motion on the floor to adjourn till tomorrow night at 7.

All those in favor?

Those opposed?

And don't forget to DVR the hockey game so that you're all right here tomorrow night.

Thank you, everyone.

(Meeting adjourned.)
CERTIFICATE

I, Julie M. Lazdins, Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true, accurate, and complete transcript of the recorded media, to the best of my knowledge, skill, and ability.

______________________
Julie M. Lazdins

______________________
Julie M. Lazdins
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