

More Letters

Write in Lucienne Foulks for the Amherst School Board

To the editor:
I encourage you to support Lucienne Foulks as a write-in candidate for the Amherst School Board on March 9. I have known Lucienne for almost 15 years and have always been impressed with her intelligence, creativity and work ethic. She is able to see through complex situations to find that which is truly important, is not afraid to make difficult decisions and always shows respect even when opinions differ. I believe those qualities, among others, will make her a great addition to the Amherst school board. I also believe that having a background in education and children in the school system add to her qualifications.
Times are tough and many people are losing their jobs or facing cut backs. There just isn't as much money out there with which to work. I firmly believe that Lucienne will work diligently to keep the quality of our schools a priority while pushing for fiscal responsibility. She will be honest, open to suggestion and will keep lines of communication open.
Keep education a priority! Write in Lucienne Foulks for the Amherst School Board on March 9.

*Sincerely,
Carol Hopfenspirger
Amherst*

Vote No On Returning to Town Meeting Form of Government

To the editor:
VOTE NO on Article 42 on the Amherst Town Ballot is sponsored by petition and requests the voters to vote on whether or not Amherst should return to a Town Meeting form of Government.
The Town Meeting form of Government assumes you have a facility where all eligible voters can convene to discuss the proposed budget and all the articles that would appear on a Ballot and then VOTE on them. The Town Meeting form of government would mean that the number of registered voters that would be able to participate and vote on the budget and warrants would be limited to the size of the largest gathering place we could find to accommodate those who want to attend.
I do not believe the Town Meeting form of government works well for towns with over 10,000 residents and over 8,000 registered voters.

*Jan Bunker
Amherst*

Brew Will Bring Town and School Together

To the editor:
I encourage all Amherst voters to go to the Polls on March 9th and support Dwight Brew in his run for Selectman. I have known Dwight for many years and was a member of the Town Ways and Means Committee, which he chaired from 2001-2003. He was excellent at budgeting and really researching all items included in the warrants. After this term, Dwight became a member of the Amherst School Board where he has been both financially and educationally really responsible. I am an education advocate, who has promoted and served on all our town school boards and our State Education Board. Dwight and I have spoken often over his last 7 years as a Board member. I will say to all citizens that our school system for the first time in the 32 years I have been involved is really financially sound and even with all the extra testing etc. we are promoting the best education we possibly can. Dwight has certainly helped to promote these aspects. He is fiscally conservative, very cooperative, always searching for the best answer and very businesslike in his approach. I know Dwight will bring many of these attributes to the Board of Selectmen. It will be wonderful to have a member who can bring town and school together and as a tax payer I believe you will be surprised at how we will move forward as the schools have done.
So I hope you will join me in voting for Dwight Brew for Selectman on March 9th.

*Ann Logan
Amherst*

Reconstruction of 23 Miles of Road at a Cost of \$15 Million

To the editor:
This is a response to Tedd Landon's letter to the editor in the February 23rd Citizen regarding the road bond.
In the summer of 2008 (and updated in 2009) two UNH engineering students were hired to observe and then record the condition of all 122 miles of our roads (i.e., patterns of cracks and other signs of deterioration). The data collected was entered into the Road Surface Management Plan (RSMP) program and all sections of each road were given a status. Almost 23 miles of 106 sections of 54 of our roads were considered in need of reconstruction either by reclaiming or rebuilding. The remaining sections were assigned a maintenance need such as crack seal or overlay.
In January 2008 the selectmen appointed a Road Funding Analysis Committee (RFAC). Their research showed that the 23 miles of road in need of reconstruction could be addressed at a cost of \$15 million. The selectmen have chosen to write a 2010 warrant article for a \$15 million bonding authority with a \$4 million limit in any year.
Final determination of exactly what needs to be done to each section of bad road is pending engineering studies, such as core samples of the road (up to four feet deep), and other on-site observations and tests. A detailed plan cannot be developed until that work is done. But engineering is expensive.
The RFAC felt strongly that engineering work should be deferred until the bond passes, and that it would be irresponsible to spend taxpayer dollars before that. The cost of the engineering (about \$15,000 per mile of road) is included in the \$15 million, as are the permit fees and supervision costs.
If the bond passes in March, an engineer will be hired. The engineering work will be done in stages, starting with several groups of roads to be determined by the department of public works director, the town administrator, and the road commission. A number of factors, including alternate routes during construction, will be considered in deciding the order of the work to be done. This process will continue over a four- or five-year period until all 23 miles are completed. Tedd mentioned Mack Hill Road. Contrary to his assertion, Mack Hill has always been on the list for reconstruction – 1.7 miles of it. It is estimated that 1.2 miles will be rebuilt by removing all material (including Tedd's "mud") three or more feet below the roadbed and replacing it with good gravel that will drain well. An estimated 0.5 miles will be reclaimed – that is the top 18 to 24 inches of material, including the asphalt, will be ground up and put back in place, creating a homogeneous base on which the new paving will be placed.
Please remember to vote on March 9th.

*Liz Overholt
Road Funding Analysis Committee
Bill Overholt
Road Funding Analysis Committee;
Chair, Road Commission*

Dwight Has Brought Public Trust to the Amherst School Board

To the editor:
It seems that we have some exceptionally good candidates for Selectman this year. I know three of them and respect and admire all three, but the candidate that I know best, having worked closely with him for the past five years on the Amherst School Board, is Dwight Brew. Dwight has been a prime mover in establishing public trust in the Amherst Board. He has led the Board in being open, financially responsible, insistent on educational quality, and responsive to public opinion. He is consistently fair in his dealings with people.
Dwight has the respect of his fellow board members. He gives each subject careful thought, listens to all sides, and then takes the position that he thinks is right for the community. He is known on the Amherst and SAU boards for his independent thinking and dogged determination to do what is in the best interests of the town and the voters.
As a Selectman he can offer both depth of knowledge and the enthusiasm of a new board member. His grasp of municipal budgets and financial planning from his years on the Town Ways and Means and the Amherst School Board would be assets that any town board could benefit from. I hope that people will vote for Dwight. He has been a great school board member and would be a great member of the Board of Selectmen.

*Sincerely,
Nancy Head
Amherst*

AEA Asks Support for Article 12

To the editor:
The Amherst Education Association (AEA) and the Amherst School Board (ASB) opened negotiations in the fall of 2009, in hopes of crafting a successor agreement for the 2010-11 school year. As stated at the Amherst School District deliberative session on February 4, 2010, the ASB and the AEA have agreed not to pursue negotiations any further. This was not a contentious decision by either party. Both the AEA and ASB are sensitive to the community of Amherst in regards to the economic times we are facing. The AEA is grateful to the Town of Amherst for supporting the most recent three year collective bargaining agreement (set to expire in June 2010). Amherst School District teachers will not receive a raise or step increase for the 2010-11 school year. Negotiations will resume in the fall of 2010 for a future collective bargaining agreement. The AEA asks you to support Article 12, the total Amherst School District budget, which will require your approval on March 9, 2010.
The AEA, despite not having a new successor agreement for the 2010-11 school year, would appreciate your support of other successor agreements in the community including the Amherst School District Support Staff contract (Article 13) and the Souhegan High School budget (Article 2) which will appear on the Amherst and Souhegan School District warrants on March 9, 2010.
In addition the Amherst Police Department entered into negotiations with the Amherst Board of Selectman for a collective bargaining agreement after working without a contract this past year. These negotiations went to a Fact Finder (a neutral third party) and a report was generated and accepted by the police union. Amherst citizens are being asked to accept this report in Article #28 on the town ballot on March 9th. It is in the AEA's opinion that the Fact Finder's report is reasonable and should receive community support. This would allow our police department to stay competitive with other towns in maintaining a strong police force.
Let us all continue to support our valued employees who enrich our lives and protect us on a daily basis.

*Cordially,
Peter Desnoyers
Amherst Education Association*

► Lean Operating Budgets continued from page 1

if Article 28 is defeated.
Capital Reserve Funds
Article 30: Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund, authorize withdrawal of \$150,000 to purchase Emergency Response Ambulance.
Article 31: Establish a Bridge Replacement Fund with \$20,000, (\$0.01).
Article 32: Recreational Facilities Capital Reserve Fund, \$250,000 from surplus to deposit in Fund.
Article 33: Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$150,000 to deposit in Reserve Fund, (\$0.08).
Article 35: Assessing Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$35,000 and deposit in Reserve Fund, (\$0.02).
Article 36: Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$5,000 to deposit in Reserve Fund, (\$0.01).
Article 37: Town 250th Anniversary Celebration Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$5,000 to deposit in Reserve Fund, (\$0.01).
Article 38: Forestview Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$15,000 deposit to Reserve Fund, (\$0.01).
Article 39: Town Computer System Capital Reserve Fund, raise \$5,000 to deposit to Reserve Fund, (\$0.01).

Article 40: Health and Human Services Agencies, to raise \$35,000 to support agencies that provide services to Amherst residents. (\$0.02)
Article 41: By petition, To Define Marriage.
Article 42: By petition. A sense of the voters on returning to Town Meeting form of Government.
Article 43: To Create a Capital Reserve Fund for Transportation with an Additional Motor Vehicle Registration Fee (by petition). To see if the town will vote to collect an additional motor vehicle registration fee of \$1.50 per vehicle for the purpose of supporting a municipal transportation fund.

Tax Rate
The total of the three operating budgets is \$0.39.
The three bonds total \$0.32.
The remaining town warrant articles (#26 – 43) total \$0.19.
Total: \$0.90/thousand

If the town's total valuation increases, the tax rate will be adjusted down.

Vote, Tuesday, March 9

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Art Event!

Phil Bean Reception
11am-3pm, Sat. March 13
Come meet well-known Milford artist, Phil Bean and enjoy light refreshments while viewing his original pastels and oil paintings. Phil will give a live painting demonstration 10am-2pm, Saturday, March 20. His art remains on display through March 26.
See our online gallery at www.arttown.com.

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