



2024 Voter's Guide

The Board of Selectmen are pleased to present our residents with the Voter's Guide to assist all voters who plan to visit the polls on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at Pelham High School between the hours of 7:00am and 8:00pm. Please note that voter turnout can be quite high during peak hours, so be sure to follow posted directions and traffic patterns to ensure the safety of all parties. Due to ongoing health and safety concerns, we request that anyone feeling unwell or otherwise showing symptoms of any infection, kindly practice basic precautions for the health and safety of others.

The purpose of this guide is to help you, the voter, make informed decisions as you cast your ballot. The way the Town operates and how much it spends is determined by you, the voters. Please note that the State's "No Means No" law prohibits the Town from spending any funds for the purposes described in the articles you are voting on, should the majority vote "no". The sole exemption is Article 6, the Town Budget. Please refer to Article 6 for explanation.

In the event you have questions that are not answered in this Voter's Guide, we welcome you to call the Selectmen's Office and you will be connected to the correct department. We strongly encourage you to vote on March 12, 2024, and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued civic participation and to remind you that, regardless of the outcome, we move forward together, as the Town of Pelham.

Sincerely,

Pelham Board of Selectmen

Kevin Cote, Chair - 2024
Jaie Bergeron, Vice Chair - 2026
Heather Corbett - 2026
Jason Croteau - 2025
Charlene Takesian - 2025

**Town of Pelham
State of New Hampshire
2024 Town Meeting**

To the inhabitants of the Town of Pelham, in the County of Hillsborough and the State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in Town affairs, you are hereby notified of the following annual Town Meeting Schedule.

**First Session of Annual Meeting
(Deliberative Session)**

You are hereby notified to meet at the Sherburne Hall, 6 Village Green, Pelham, New Hampshire on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 7:00pm. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles numbered 2-14. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles the wording of which is prescribed by law shall not be amended and (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended.

**Second Session of Annual Town Meeting
(Official Ballot Voting)**

You are hereby notified to meet again at the Pelham High School, 85 Marsh Road, Pelham, New Hampshire on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, between the hours of 7:00am and 8:00pm to vote by official ballot in choosing all necessary Town officials for the ensuing year and to vote on warrant articles numbered 1-14.

A Citizen's Guide to Understanding Terms

Appropriations: A sum of money or total of assets devoted to a specific purpose.

Article: Individual numbered items within the warrant.

Budget Committee: An *elected* body of eleven (11) individuals which reviews and elects to approve or not approve all town and school budgets, as well as any and all articles involving the expenditure of funds. The budgets presented are prepared by the Budget Committee.

CBA: A Collective Bargaining Agreement is a contract between a group of employees (police, fire, or other municipal employees) and the Board of Selectmen, cost items of which are approved by the voters.

Capital Reserve Fund: Essentially a “savings account” created by action of a prior town meeting vote into which funds are placed for a designated purpose, but limited to capital expenditures- such as a piece of major equipment, building, etc.

Conservation Commission: A group of *appointed* officials tasked with “the proper utilization and protection of the natural resources of the Town, per RSA 36-A:2”.

Forestry Committee: An *appointed* group of five (5) members who volunteer to plan, preserve, and protect public, forested lands (forests, parks, open space, water courses, wetlands) and the wildlife therein. They often work in conjunction with the Conservation Committee, Planning, the Board of Selectmen, as well as with Parks and Recreation.

Map/Lot: This designated the exact location of a parcel of land on the Town tax map.

Non-Capital Reserve Fund: The same “savings account” concept as a capital reserve fund, but not specifically tied to buildings or equipment.

Planning Board: An *elected* body - Pursuant to RSA 673:2, the Planning Board shall consist of seven (7) members, six (6) of whom shall be elected by the local legislative body and the seventh shall be an ex-officio member appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

RSA: Refers to a state law- Revised Statute Annotated. These laws can be found on the State of New Hampshire's website under “Laws and Rules”.

Special Warrant Article: As provided in State law, this designation identifies any appropriation in the article as non-lapsing (having no expiration date) and non-transferable (not to be used for anything other than the specific expressed purpose).

Unassigned Fund Balance: The accumulation of revenues over expenditures, accrued over the years. It can be used for any purpose voted on by the Board of Selectmen (with app and has been used to offset tax increases as well as to offset the cost of “big ticket” projects, such as the fire station.

Warrant: The official legal name for a group of articles presented to the voters.

Water Commission: The Water Commission is a board of five (5) *appointed* members who act in a fact finding and advisory capacity on all issues pertaining to water in the Town of Pelham.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: An *appointed* body of five (5) members. As a quasi-judicial board, the Zoning Board of Adjustment's (ZBA) primary responsibility is to determine what is lawful, not necessarily popular in determining the balance between the constitutional rights of property owners to the reasonable use of their land and the public rights of others.

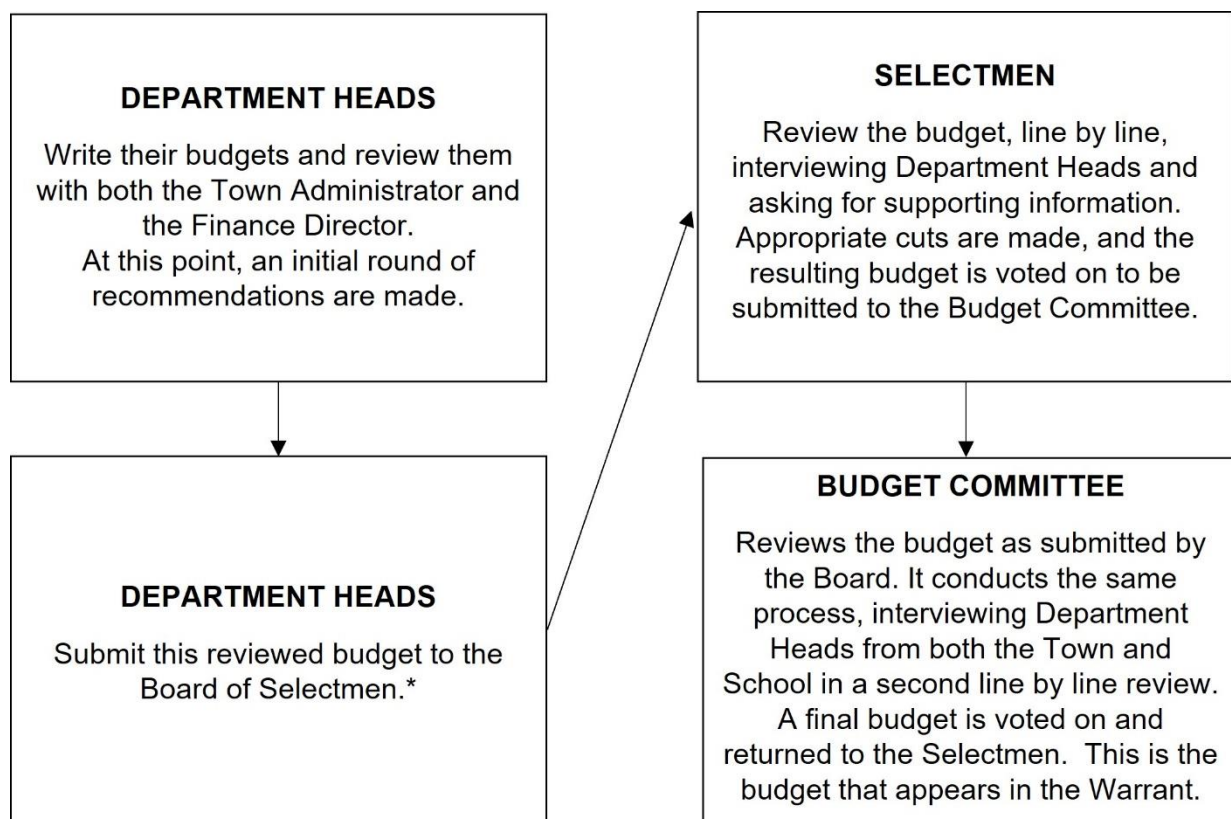
In 2023, the Board of Selectmen decided to include the vote by which an article was approved. This was done in an attempt to help further educate citizens as to which issues do not have the full support of the Board and may require some extra attention on the part of every voter. The vote is indicated at the end of each warrant:

Example: **Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)**

This format indicates - Votes for, Votes against, and Abstentions*

*Abstentions indicate that a seated member of a Board declined to vote on a warrant.

How does the Town determine its operating budget?



**It should be noted that the Trustees of the Cemetery and the Trustees of the Library present their budgets as a courtesy to the Board. Neither budget is controlled by the Board of Selectmen.*

ARTICLES FOR VOTING

Article #1: Election of Officials

To see what action the Town will take in the election of the following Officers: One (1) Selectman for a the term of three (3) years; One (1) Town Moderator for the term of two (2) years; One (1) Budget Committee member for the term of one (1) year; Three (3) Budget Committee members for the term of three (3) years; Two (2) Cemetery Trustees for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Library Trustee for the term of three (3) years; Two (2) Planning Board members for the term of three (3) years; One (1) Supervisor of the Checklist for the term of six (6) years; One (1) Trustee of the Trust Funds for the term of three (3) years.

Article #2: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 1

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article III Section 307-13 Additional Lot Size and Street Access Requirements to add multi-family lots to the minimum lot size requirements of minimum contiguous square footage of 217,800 square feet of non-wetlands, and to add the following language: For septic loading calculations, non-contiguous areas separated by a wetland or stream shall be treated separately. The total number of units shall be split up and built on each part of the parcel based on the square footage of the contiguous non-wetland area of each area of the parcel.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #2 Explanation: This amendment would extend the same requirements as workforce housing parent lots to multi-family lots with the intent of avoiding overcrowding on a lot that has wetlands. This change would not allow wetlands to be added into lot sizing or septic loading calculations.

A YES vote would require lots that are used for multi-family housing to contain a minimum square footage of non-wetland soils and not allow wetlands to be included in minimum lot sizing for septic loading calculations.

A NO vote would keep the current language and allow wetlands to be calculated into the minimum lot sizes for multi-family lots and also allow wetlands to be included in the calculations of minimum lot sizing for septic loading.

Article #3: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No. 2

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to add a new article to Pelham's Zoning Ordinance Article IX Age Restricted Housing Ordinance to provide important needed housing opportunities for seniors in Pelham and to recognize the need for granting provisions whereby appropriate housing alternatives may be provided for seniors fifty-five (55) years of age and over.

Recommended by the Planning Board (5-2-0)

Article #3 Explanation: This article would encourage the development of housing units for seniors aged 55 and over. It provides a "use incentive" that allows for increased density and flexibility in development. The Age Restricted Housing (ARH) facilities must be established and maintained in compliance with the Fair Housing Act, as amended, 42 USC Sec. 3601, and the New Hampshire Elderly Housing Statute, RSA 354-A:15 and applicable state and federal regulations. The

ordinance is consistent with the intent of the 2023 Pelham Master Plan to provide important needed housing opportunities for seniors in Pelham and to recognize the need for granting provisions whereby appropriate housing alternatives may be provided for seniors fifty-five (55) years of age and over.

A YES vote would create a new ordinance to provide housing opportunities specifically for seniors aged fifty-five and older.

A NO vote would not allow for alternative housing opportunities specifically for seniors aged fifty-five and older.

Article #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendment No 3

Are you in favor of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Pelham to amend Pelham Zoning Article VIII Floodplain Development Ordinance, Sections 307-45, 307-46, & 307-47 as necessary to comply with requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Recommended by the Planning Board (7-0-0)

Article #4 Explanation: *When new maps are produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the agency requires that communities who are members of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have ordinances that are fully compliant with the NFIP regulations. All proposed amendments have been identified during a review by the NH Office of Planning and Development and will bring the Town of Pelham into compliance with FEMA’s requirements.*

A YES vote would allow the current Floodplain Ordinance to be updated as per the requirements of FEMA keeping the Town of Pelham fully compliant with the NFIP.

A NO vote would leave the current Floodplain Ordinance as it is, and the Town of Pelham would be out of compliance with the requirements of FEMA and potentially at risk of not being able to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

**Article #5: Public Works and Municipal
Collective Bargaining Agreement 2024-2028**

Shall the Town vote to approve cost items included in the five (5) year Collective Bargaining Agreement ratified by the Board of Selectmen and the Pelham Public Works and Municipal Employees, Local 1801 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), which calls for following increases in salary and benefits and to further raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Forty-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Thirteen Dollars (\$142,713) to fund this year of the agreement, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0-0)

Year	Cost	Accumulated Cost
2024	\$142,713	\$142,713
2025	\$122,644	\$265,357
2026	\$ 98,605	\$363,962
2027	\$ 90,784	\$454,756

2028* \$100,114 \$554,860

*Including 3 months of 2029

Article #5 Explanation: *The above warrant article would provide funding for a collectively bargained contract between the Pelham Public Works & Municipal Employees Union, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCE), Local #1801 and the Town of Pelham. This contract was collectively negotiated between representatives of Local #1801 and representatives of the Pelham Board of Selectmen.*

The covered employees include workers from the Highway Department, Transfer Station, Town Hall, as well as civilian staff at the Police and Fire Departments.

The proposed contract is a five-year contract to begin at the expiration of this group's current contract that ends on March 31, 2024. The contract provides for an increased wage scale with additional cost of living pay increases of 2.5% for each year of the contract. This increased wage scale and cost of living increases will help the town keep and attract quality employees during a time of increased competition for workers.

The proposed contract also has provisions for modest increases in employee contributions for health insurance benefits. These increases will help offset rising health insurance costs to the Town.

This proposed contract was negotiated in good faith with both sides making concessions and compromises to complete the finished contract.

A YES vote would approve the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Pelham Public Works and Municipal Employees Union, Local #1801 and the Town of Pelham.

A NO vote would not approve the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Pelham Public Works and Municipal Employees Union, Local #1801 and the Town of Pelham. Local #1801 would then be working under an expired contract and would need to reopen negotiations with the town. The lack of an approved contract can lead to increased employee turnover and poor morale amongst employees.

Article #6: Operating Budget

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth herein totaling Twenty-One Million, Seven-Hundred Ninety-One Thousand, Eight-Hundred and Seven-Three Dollars (\$21,791,873)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Twenty-One Million, Five-Hundred Twenty-Three Thousand, Four-Hundred and Ninety-Three Dollars (\$21,523,493)? which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (4-0-0)

Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-4-0)

<u>Department</u>	<u>Department Request</u>	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Budget Committee</u>	<u>Deliberative Session - FINAL</u>
Assessor	\$ 240,825	\$ 240,825	\$ 237,825	\$ 237,825
Budget Committee	\$ 2	\$ 2	\$ 2	\$ 2
Cable Department	\$ 172,066	\$ 169,186	\$ 169,186	\$ 172,086
Cemetery	\$ 281,002	\$ 281,002	\$ 240,329	\$ 240,329
Conservation	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000	\$ 10,700	\$ 10,700
Debt Service Interest	\$ 52,857	\$ 52,857	\$ 52,857	\$ 52,857
Debt Service Principal	\$ 363,170	\$ 363,170	\$ 363,170	\$ 363,170
Elections	\$ 65,868	\$ 65,868	\$ 65,868	\$ 65,868
Emergency Management	\$ 10,781	\$ 10,781	\$ 10,781	\$ 10,781
Fire Department	\$ 3,178,554	\$ 3,137,264	\$ 3,058,288	\$ 3,127,264
Health Officer	\$ 75,892	\$ 69,652	\$ 69,652	\$ 69,652
Health Services	\$ 45,800	\$ 45,800	\$ 45,800	\$ 45,800
Highway Maintenance	\$ 2,336,633	\$ 2,150,070	\$ 2,130,770	\$ 2,130,770
Human Services	\$ 75,650	\$ 75,650	\$ 75,650	\$ 75,650
Insurance	\$ 3,380,115	\$ 3,380,115	\$ 3,430,440	\$ 3,430,440
Legal	\$ 127,500	\$ 127,500	\$ 127,500	\$ 127,500
Library	\$ 559,072	\$ 559,072	\$ 554,072	\$ 554,072
Parks & Recreation	\$ 301,123	\$ 301,123	\$ 287,623	\$ 287,623
Planning Dept	\$ 671,296	\$ 609,296	\$ 571,296	\$ 609,296
Police Department	\$ 3,899,690	\$ 3,896,330	\$ 3,896,330	\$ 3,896,330
Retirement	\$ 2,564,053	\$ 2,559,197	\$ 2,553,609	\$ 2,553,609
Selectmen	\$ 707,040	\$ 700,741	\$ 703,990	\$ 703,990
Senior Center	\$ 211,030	\$ 211,030	\$ 201,030	\$ 201,030
Technology	\$ 367,459	\$ 367,459	\$ 306,509	\$ 306,509
Town Buildings	\$ 1,170,394	\$ 924,491	\$ 824,654	\$ 824,654
Town Celebrations	\$ 24,960	\$ 24,960	\$ 24,960	\$ 24,960
Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$ 328,289	\$ 328,289	\$ 328,289	\$ 328,289
Transfer	\$ 1,421,329	\$ 1,333,467	\$ 1,333,467	\$ 1,333,467
Treasurer	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
Trust Funds	\$ 350	\$ 350	\$ 350	\$ 350
Total	\$ 22,650,800	\$ 22,003,547	\$ 21,681,997	\$ 21,791,873

Article #6 Explanation: Prior to the Deliberative Session, the Budget Committee (9-0-0) and the Board of Selectmen (5-0-0) both supported a Town operating budget of \$21,681,997.

After the Deliberative Session, the Board of Selectmen voted to approve (4-0-0) an amended Town budget of \$21,791,873. The Budget Committee tied on a vote of support of the amended Town budget and thus did not recommend it (4-4-0).

Should the presented operating budget fail to be supported by citizen vote, the Town will revert as per state law, to a "default" budget of \$21,523,493. The default budget is derived by using last year's operational budget with the addition of certain adjustments for previous obligations of the Town or by law. If the Town reverts to a "default" budget, it may result in a reduction in some Town services.

Article #7: Highway Block Grant

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$345,000) for repair, maintenance, purchase of equipment and upgrading of Town roads, to be offset by anticipated Highway Block Grant funds. This special article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, IV. No money to be raised by taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0-0)

Article #7 Explanation: Each year the State of New Hampshire distributes a portion of the State highway fund to municipalities through a local highway aid formula based on population and miles of class IV and V roads. The State highway fund includes revenues from the road toll (gas tax) and State motor vehicle registration fees. These funds can be used for the construction and maintenance of class IV and V roads – including the purchase of equipment used to maintain these roads. These funds could also be used to implement sidewalks.

A YES vote would accept the funding granted to the Town of Pelham from the State of New Hampshire and allow the appropriation to be non-lapsing.

A NO vote would disallow the appropriation from being non-lapsing.

Article #8: Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three-million four hundred sixty thousand dollars (\$3,460,000) to construct two roundabouts at the intersections of Sherburne Road and Mammoth Road and Mammoth Road and Marsh Road. Said appropriation will be offset by a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program (CMAQ) Grant in the amount of two million-six hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$2,680,000) and also to be offset with exaction fees on deposit of one-hundred and ten-thousand (\$110,000) dollars and to authorize the Selectmen to expend the remainder of six-hundred and seventy thousand dollars (\$670,000) from the Unassigned Fund Balance. No money to be raised by taxation. This special article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, IV. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0-0)

Article #8 Explanation: Background: Back in 2018, the voters passed a special warrant article that appropriated \$2 million dollars to address traffic congestion problems at Sherburne at Mammoth and Mammoth at Marsh. A Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program (CMAQ) grant through the NHDOT had been awarded to Pelham covering 60% (\$1.2M) of the project estimate and \$130k was to come from exaction fees and \$670k from Unassigned Fund Balance. "This no tax impact special warrant article" passed with a 987 to 359 vote. Due to construction delays, only phase 1 design costs amounting to \$183k have been incurred. The \$670k that came from unassigned fund balance currently sits in the Sherburne/Mammoth capital projects fund, but the total appropriation lapsed at the end of 2023.

The cost of the project has increased and is now anticipated at close to \$3.5M. The State has agreed to fund the construction phases of these projects at 80% - while continuing to fund the design phases at 60%. We are asking the voters to re-appropriate the cost of these projects. The Town's share will be funded with remaining exaction fees and up to \$670k in fund balance. There is no tax impact for this article. Should the article fail, then the Town will need to refund the State

for reimbursements received so far (approximately \$103k). Construction is currently anticipated for the Southern rotary (Sherburne at Mammoth) in 2024 and the Northern rotary (Mammoth at Marsh) in 2026.

A YES vote would allow the Board of Selectmen to complete the CMAQ project at no additional cost to the taxpayers.

A NO vote would require the Town to refund the state for reimbursements received so far approximately \$103,000 and would discontinue the CMAQ project.

Article #9: Electrical Aggregation Plan

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Pelham Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan, which authorizes the Board of Selectmen to develop and implement Pelham Community Power as described therein (pursuant to RSA 53-E:7). The program would provide a new default electric supply and new supply options for customers in Pelham. There is no cost to the Town budget, and no obligation to participate. Customers can opt out at any time and return to utility default service. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #9 Explanation: *This warrant article is asking Pelham residents to approve the Pelham Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan, which would provide residents and small businesses with additional, less expensive electricity supply options. If approved, the program would go into effect only if the default community power supply rate is less than the utility default supply rate. Customers on utility default supply will be automatically enrolled unless they opt out. Customers currently on competitive supply contracts will not be automatically enrolled. The only change you would see on your electricity bill is to the supply charge. Residents and small businesses will receive pre-implementation notices, invitations to public hearings and information sessions, prior to implementation of the Pelham Community Power Electricity Aggregation Plan, as required by RSA 53-E:7.*

A NO vote would leave electricity supply choices as they currently are, with a vast majority of residents and small businesses remaining on the utility default.

Article #10: Discontinuance of Class VI Road

Shall the Town completely discontinue as an open highway under RSA 231:43 the following highway: the portion of the Class VI road, approximately 1 mile, between the gate located at the northern most end of Saint Margaret's Drive until the gate at the western most end of Robinsons Lane. This discontinuance will take effect June 1, 2024. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen (5-0-0)

Article #10 Explanation: *The above warrant article seeks to discontinue the current Class VI road between the gate at the end of Saint Margaret's Drive and the gate at Robinsons Lane. Currently this road is a rarely travelled and overgrown dirt road. This portion of the road is almost entirely within the property of the Pelham Fish and Game Club. For safety reasons the Board of Selectmen recommend this road should be discontinued.*

A YES vote would discontinue the existence of the Class VI road between the gates at the end of Saint Margaret's Drive and Robinsons Lane.

A NO vote would allow the continued existence of a Class VI road between the gates at the end of Saint Margaret's Drive and Robinsons Lane.

The following Citizens Petition Warrant Articles are not controlled by the Board of Selectmen. Per RSA 39:3, any citizen has the right, after collecting 25 or more registered Town of Pelham voter signatures of support, to submit such warrants for consideration by the voters. The Board of Selectmen will not be entering any collective recommendation of support or non-support of the following Petition Warrant Articles.

Article #11: Citizens Petition

Shall we delegate the duties and responsibilities of the Cemetery Trustees to the Board of Selectmen? A majority vote in the affirmative shall delegate these duties to be effective 90 days after adoption and shall continue until rescinded by vote of the Town meeting.

Article #12: Citizens Petition

Are you in favor of repealing the Article 19, voted on at the March 2022 Town Meeting, to reclassify Tower Hill Road, which is an unpaved Class VI Highway to a Class A Trail, beginning 2400 feet from Gumpas Hill Road to the Hudson town line, in accordance with RSA 231-A. A Class A trail is a full public right-of-way subject to public trail use with restrictions imposed by the Board of Selectmen. If repealed, Tower Hill Road, beginning 2400 feet from Gumpas Hill Road to the Hudson town line, would be reclassified back to a Class VI Highway which is a public roadway that the Town has no obligation to maintain.

Article #13: Citizens Petition

Are you in favor of repealing the Article 20, voted on the March 2022 Town Meeting, to reclassify the unpaved Class VI section of Spaulding Hill Road, beginning 300 feet from the end of the Class V section of Spaulding Hill Road to Tower Hill Road, to a Class A Trail in accordance with RSA 231-A. A Class A Trail is a full public right of way subject to the public trail use restrictions imposed by the Board of Selectmen. If repealed, the unpaved section of Spaulding Hill Road, beginning 300 feet from the end of the Class V section of Spaulding Hill Road to Tower Hill Road, will be reclassified back to a Class VI Highway which is a public roadway that the Town has no obligation to maintain.

Article #14: Citizens Petition

Shall the Town vote to establish a trail subcommittee appointed by Pelham Forestry. This volunteer trails maintenance subcommittee will be able to maintain and access Pelham's trails and verify safety for all of Pelham residents on the town lands and forest sections.

Given under our hands this 29th day of January 2024,

Kevin Cote, Chair - 2024
Jaie Bergeron, Vice Chair - 2026
Heather Corbett - 2026
Jason Croteau - 2025
Charlene Takesian - 2025