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Dear Pelham Residents,

This Voters Guide is intended to aid voters in making their decision on warrant articles by providing a brief explanation of what each warrant article is about. To obtain an official hard copy of the 2006 Warrant please visit the Selectmen's Office at the Town Hall or you can visit the Town and School town warrant website at <http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant> to obtain and review in electronic format the warrant, reviewing authorities voting record, as well as a comprehensive amount of backup data on why the warrant is being proposed.

In addition, The Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator and appropriate department heads are available to discuss any of the warrants with members of the community. We urge all citizens to be informed about issues in the town and exercise their voting rights on March 14, 2006 from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM at Pelham High School."

Sincerely,

*Pelham Board of Selectmen*

Victor Danevich, Chair - 2006

Hal Lynde, Vice-Chair - 2007

Jean-Guy Bergeron - 2007

Ed Gleason - 2008

Tom Domenico - 2008

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The Town warrant articles are listed below along with a brief, non-partisan explanation of the article. The explanations are not intended to influence your vote, but instead, to provide you with the information necessary to make an informed choice on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Article 1 – To elect officials: Moderator, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Various Trustees, Checklist Supervisor...

**Selectmen (3 years)**

*Victor Danevich*

**Town Moderator (2 years)**

*Philip R. Currier*

**Budget Committee (3 years)**

*John C. Lavalley*

*Martha A. Lowe*

*Dennis A. Viger*

**Budget Committee (1 year)**

*Eric P. Estevez*

**Cemetery Trustee (3 years)**

*Jeannette McCoy*

**Trustee of the Trust Funds (3 years)**

*Laura Domenico*

**Trustee of Trust Funds (1 year)**

*Thomas Billings Donovan*

**Supervisor of Checklist (6 years)**

*Carol Ann Fisher*



#### Article 2 - Zoning: Revise Article II to add a new definition re: Impact fees...

*This is simply a housekeeping change that would add a brief explanation of what impact fees are and how they are established to the Zoning Ordinance definition section.*

#### Article 3 - Zoning: Revise Article V to define permitted use for windmills, watermills, solar etc...

*The Planning Department has noticed an increase in questions from private citizens about whether windmills are allowed in Pelham and how to acquire building permits to erect them. The Planning Board is aware that utility structures of this type are growing in popularity as they become more affordable and proposes to add this use to the Zoning Ordinance Table of Uses, along with solar power panels that are not roof mounted and other "utility" structures. The Board feels this type of private utility structure should be allowed to help individuals and companies offset New Hampshire's high electric rates, but that to protect the welfare of Pelham residents this type of structure should have thorough Planning Board review with ample opportunity for abutter and public input at properly posted public meetings.*

#### Article 4 - Zoning: Revise Article IX for Senior & Elderly Housing to remove reference to 'site plan regulations'...

*In March, 2005 the voters approved a Senior & Elderly Housing zoning article that allows developers to build upscale housing for adult and senior citizens that will have a positive tax impact because the age restrictions result in far fewer children attending Pelham Schools. When the Senior & Elderly Housing article was drafted it inadvertently required all projects to adhere to **both** Pelham's Subdivision Regulations (intended for residential projects) and Pelham's Site Plan regulations (intended for non-residential projects). Since these two sets of regulations have different and sometimes conflicting requirements, the Planning Board is seeking to correct the error by removing all references to "Site Plan" throughout the Senior & Elderly zoning article. Senior and Elderly housing is clearly residential housing and should be governed by the Town's Subdivision regulations. Once this housekeeping correction is made all Senior & Elderly projects will be subject to a complete and thorough Planning Board review with ample opportunity for abutter and public input at properly noticed public meetings.*

#### Article 5 - Zoning: Revise Article XI to define who 'building official' is and require more details with sign application...

Question 5 is another housekeeping zoning ordinance that would clarify what information about a proposed sign must accompany the sign permit application and exactly who has the authority to issue sign permits. If Question 6 is approved, the sign permit must contain a color drawing of the proposed sign as well as details about the materials of construction and any movement or changing messages the sign may display. Currently, the definition of who issues sign permits is somewhat unclear, specifying "the building official" as the responsible individual. If this article is approved, the Board of Selectmen will have the authority to determine which Town employee is best suited to act in this capacity as building official for the review and issuance of sign permits.

#### Article 6 - Zoning: Revise Article XI to allow a small sign for lawful minor home occupations...

Under the existing zoning ordinances, minor home occupations are not allowed to have any kind of sign indicating what minor occupation(s) exist within the home. Not allowing any signs seems unfair and has resulted in an ongoing code enforcement problem. The Planning Board agrees with the Planning Director that a very small, sign (not to exceed 1.5 sq. ft. in size) without direct illumination should be allowed to advertise a minor home business. The sign's design and color would have to be appropriate for a residential neighborhood at the discretion of whomever the Board of Selectmen designates as responsible for the review and issuance of sign permits as described in Question 5. In the instance of a second legal home occupation existing within the same home, this proposed zoning change would allow a second minor home occupation sign identical in design to the first and displayed in the same manner and location. In no case would more than two signs be allowed and both would require sign permits.



**Article 7- Zoning: Revision to impact fee ordinance...** *In March 1999 the Town voted to approve our existing Impact Fee ordinance which gives the Planning Board and BOS the authority to establish impact fees assessed to new residential developments to offset the cost of Town or School capital projects impacted by the new development. Since that time, the town has collected \$1,718,451 in impact fees to help offset the cost of the new Elementary School and \$477,829 to help fund a new Fire Department main station and substation. The Planning Board is now working on an impact fee to help fund capital improvements to the Pelham Senior Center.*

*Due to recent changes in the law, the Planning Board would like to replace the existing Impact Fee Ordinance with a new Impact Fee Ordinance that would provide all the authority granted in the existing ordinance but would also allow impact fees to be created and assessed for non-residential development that would have an impact on the Town's capital infrastructure. The new proposed impact fee ordinance would also allow the Planning Board to waive impact fees in cases where the Town's infrastructure needs would be better served by contributions to existing Town infrastructure improvement projects or actual off-site work completed by the developer in lieu of impact fees or exactions for building on-site improvements.*

*Ultimately, these new waivers to the impact fee provisions would allow the Planning Board the flexibility to address certain capital needs more efficiently. Under the new proposed Impact Fee ordinance, impact fees cannot be imposed for additions to existing single-family residences and the Board of Selectmen would retain the authority to enact an impact fee that has been recommended by the Planning Board.*

**Article 8 - Bond: To raise and appropriate \$6,653,200 for the following:**

\$2,500,000	Fire Department substation in Spring Street Area
\$811,000	Municipal Building Expansion/Sherburne Hall Renovation
\$655,000	Highway Department Garage
\$1,500,000	Veteran's Park New Gym, Life Guard Facility & Restroom Facility
\$1,000,000	Roadway improvements
\$187,200	Construction Management Costs

*The purpose of this Bond is to address existing infrastructure needs of the town in an organized, efficient and financially responsible manner. There is a significant amount of additional project information on the Pelham 2006 Warrant website that provides complete details and cost support for the planned construction.*

*The proposed bond is planned for 10 years which, based upon latest market conditions, will result in a tax rate impact of \$0.29 the first year and \$1.24 or less in succeeding years. Consolidation of the bond addresses immediate infrastructure needs, assures that the town secures the lowest fixed rate for the foreseeable future and contributes to stabilizing the tax rate. This approach mitigates the impact of inflation and escalating fuel and labor cost increases should these projects be deferred or segregated for separate implementation.*

**Item 1 Fire Substation on Shepherd Road (Covers Ledge Road through Spring Street Area)** *Currently, the response time for emergencies in the northeast section of town is 12 minutes or more. There are several new residential communities in this area and more are anticipated. The establishment of a substation with an engine, an ambulance and assigned personnel will address life safety issues, offer opportunities for reductions in insurance rates for the citizens and the town and limit the town's liability in addressing safety concerns.*

**Item 2a Sherburne Hall Upgrade** *Currently Sherburne Hall is not up to building code. This presents a significant liability risk under the town's insurance provisions and is therefore unsuitable for public use. Activities in this facility are now limited to town government meetings.*

*The intent of this bond element is to bring Sherburne Hall up to code so that town groups involved in theater, Scouting, recreational or fundraising endeavors will have an adequate facility for their purposes. The Sherburne*



Hall Committee will still be responsible for fund raising and improvements beyond bringing the hall up to necessary code requirements.

Once Sherburne Hall is brought up to code it will become a true focal point for the community. Numerous groups and organizations have already expressed an interest in providing educational and entertaining presentations in this facility.

**Item 2b Municipal Building Expansion** In addition to the use limitations on Sherburne Hall which restrict availability of facilities for meetings, and other government functions, the town is obligated to maintain the town annex as a facility for Pelham Television and fire department storage. The annex does not meet code requirements and will continue to incur higher than average operational and maintenance costs.

The most fiscally responsible approach is to consolidate town government into one facility. There are six vacant rooms in the municipal building which can be updated to provide space for PTV, a town government meeting center, a conference room for elected and volunteer meetings, upgraded facilities for Park and Recreation and allow space for a part time code enforcement officer. A 1,700 square foot storage area will also be created in the unused portion behind the Police Department. This will provide permanent record storage for various departments and installation of a large overhead door will permit easy access for Recreation Department storage of canoes, bicycles, soccer nets and the like in a separate, segregated area.

**Item 3 Highway Department Garage** Currently, all highway road equipment is stored either outside or in the existing salt storage facility. Aside from the detrimental effects that a salt storage environment has on the equipment, vehicle startup and operation is impeded in the winter months, such that response times to safety and service concerns are less than desirable. In addition, many small repairs during snow storms are sub contracted to a repair facility which increases costs. With a highway garage, facilities would be available to allow maintenance and repair of vehicles, as well as cleaning, both of which will protect these assets and extend their life cycle.

**Item 4 Parks and Recreation Facilities – Please view the 2006 Warrant website for complete backup data**  
 The facilities at PVMP are being designed for multi-purpose uses, not just “a gym for basketball. , There are over 1,000 families/households involved in Parks and Recreation programs. The lodge replacement building will be designed to have a walking area for seniors, and also allow for craft, sports collectible, flower shows, etc. as well as having conference and meeting space. There will be a benefit for nearly everyone in town. Currently, for 10-weeks of the year the Parks and Recreation office operates in the lodge at Pelham Veterans Memorial Park. It has been documented in police reports that nearly all of the vandalism that occurs at the park occurs during the 42-weeks that the camp is closed. The lodge replacement building at the park will be open at least 360 days of the year and at least 16 hours per day. Not only will the new buildings be built to deter damage caused by vandals but the vandals themselves will have little time to do their damage without being caught based on the number of hours that the facility will be open and used. The infrastructure (with some minor improvements) is already in place for the facility improvements at PVMP. The lodge replacement project also meets the needs of the summer program by providing a safe indoor facility large enough to contain the entire summer program. At PVMP a dedicated parking area for the facilities could be created without any adverse impact on any other programs. Land is available at PVMP without taking away existing field or trail space. See [www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant](http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant) for direct links for the following:

- [Park and Recreation Photo's of Veteran's Memorial Park](#)
- [Park and Recreation - Brief History of PVMP and PVMP Facilities](#)
- [Park and Recreation Proposed Facility Spec's and floor plans](#)

**Item 5 Highway Improvements** Highway road improvements comprise one million dollars of this total package. A large culvert on Gumpas Hill Road has become ineffective and serious damage will occur if it is not replaced. Because of its size and wetland impact, state permitting will be required to install a larger culvert that will serve several generations to come. The Pelham Road project is long overdue and has deteriorated from traffic it was





never designed to accommodate. The Dutton Road project will widen about 2,000 feet and will overlay the entire road with new pavement. The objective is to keep the rural flavor of the road but widen some areas that are simply unsafe at today's traffic volume. This project is timely in that traffic through Pelham on this popular road will significantly increase during the I-93 widening project slated to begin in coming years.

Once these necessary improvements are implemented, it is expected that the yearly highway grant from the state will suffice to maintain existing roads.

**Item 6 Construction Management Services** This funding covers project construction oversight planning associated with the package concept. In pursuing this approach it is believed that numerous benefits will result, such as, maintenance of bidding and procurement standards, economies of scale, efficiency in planning and coordination and consolidated procurement of services and supplies.

**Article 9 - To raise and appropriate \$9,382,281 for the 2006 operating budget...**

This Warrant provides the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee recommended town operating budget for 2006. Also included, in accordance with state regulations, is the compliant default budget, which would be in effect should the electorate reject the recommended budget. Review of the recommended 2006 budget versus the 2005 operating budget shows a net increase of 9.5%. Included in this growth are approximately 5.2% of contractual obligations resulting from existing contracts.

The remaining 4.3% represents some restoration of services and supplies deferred or omitted from the default budget passed by the voters last March 2005 and some effects of inflation on services and supplies, most notably fuel for all departments and raw materials required for highway maintenance.

The Board of Selectmen effected \$166,504 in cuts from the requested budget and the Budget Committee reduced the budget further by \$64,806, all of which represents a total of \$231,310 or a 2.4% reduction from departmental requests.

Voter approval of the recommended budget will enable the town to provide necessary services and supplies consistent with voter expectations, as well as, satisfy public safety considerations.

**Article 10 - Petition Warrant: To rescinding adoption of the Municipal Budget Act and eliminate the Budget Committee.** (See [www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant](http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant) for original petition.)

**Article 11 - To raise and appropriate \$125,000 in the compensated absence fund...**

Employees accumulate vacation and personal time and are allowed, by contract, to carry a portion over from year to year. When the employee terminates employment or retires, local contracts and state law require balances be paid in a lump sum. Although the amount is limited per employee, the total when considering all 67 full time employees is substantial. The town funds this liability annually to the extent deemed necessary to cover expected expenditures and needs to replenish the fund balance because of a series of retirements and employee turnover which occurred in the last fiscal year.

**Article 12 - To raise and appropriate \$136,118 for Social Security, Medicare, NH Retirement...**

Of the 67 full time employees of the town, currently 28 are not enrolled in Social Security or Medicare. This is due to decisions made when participation in these programs was optional. The town is still "grandfathered" in the self funded program and offers no other retirement program to these employees. Adoption of this Article would allow all employees to become eligible for Social Security and Medicare. Additionally, employees who are not already covered by the NH Retirement System (any non Police or Fire personnel) would be eligible to participate in the retirement program.



**Article 13 - To establish 5 new town forests...**

*This article proposes to designate 5 Town Owned Parcels as 'Town Forests. The main purpose of a town forest shall be to encourage the proper management of timber, firewood and other natural resources through planting, timber stand improvement, thinning, harvesting, reforestation, and other multiple use programs consistent with the forest management program, any deed restrictions and any pertinent local ordinances or regulations.*

**Article 14 - To see if the Town will accept the following Town roads...**

*The roads listed have been constructed to Town regulations as Class V roads and have completed a final inspection by the Highway Agent, Town Engineering Firm and Planning Board.*

**Article 15 - To establish a Special Detail Revolving Fund...**

*This article asks the Town to establish a special detail revolving fund in accordance with [RSA 31:95-h \(c\)](#) that will allow the Town to collect fees to fund direct labor costs associated for public safety details without any impact on the town budget or taxes.*

**Article 16 - Petition Warrant: To establish a Parks and Recreation Revolving Account...**

*Warrant Article 16 is the first step to making Parks and Recreation **Programs** self funded. The revenues from sponsored programs would be placed in a fund held by the treasurer. This account is governed by state law and as such the revenues created from the programs have to be used for a specific purpose. The concept is that all programs would be funded from this account rather than the general budget. Programs will be able to expand (increasing revenues but also expenses) if warranted without burdening the budget. This means there will be fewer children turned away from a program due to inadequate funding. This budgeting procedure has been suggested by the Town's auditors for three consecutive years.*

**Article 17 - To establish an Ambulance Replacement Revolving Fund...**

*Each year the Fire Department asks voters to support a warrant article that puts money away into a capital reserve account to replace or refurbish an ambulance. This year the state passed new legislation that encourages towns to create a new type of revolving account that places ambulance fees collected into this new account instead of the general fund. Please see [RSA 31:95-h](#) for more information.*

*Passage of this warrant moves the town closer to a self funding method of being able to refurbish or replace an ambulance when needed, keeping the tax rate stable over a longer period of time instead of having to pay for an ambulance replacement all at once.*

**Article 18 - To raise and appropriate \$35,000 for year 3 of 3 of the Town technology plan...**

*This warrant proposes to fund the 3rd year of a 3 year technology refresh plan for the Municipal buildings. Year 3 of the plan completes the purchase of standardized computer hardware, software, networking and server components used to operate Town functions. Year 1 refreshed the Municipal Center, Year 2 refreshed the Police and Fire Departments, and Year 3 will focus on the Library, Senior Center, Transfer Station, Highway Department and server components.*

**Article 19 - To raise and appropriate \$55,234 for the supervisor's union contract...**

*The Town has ratified a three year agreement with the Supervisor's Association that includes the Police and Fire Chiefs, Police Captain, Highway Agent, Cable Coordinator, Cemetery Superintendent, Transfer Station Superintendent, Parks and Recreation Director, Planning Director, and Senior Citizens Director. The agreement calls for a cost of living increase in each year and incremental increases in the employee's share of insurance costs which will be 20% in year three. Additionally, employees hired after approval of the contract will accept a reduced vacation/sick time package.*



**Article 20 - To raise and appropriate \$70,000 to refurbish a 1985 Ford Tanker (Engine 3)...**

*This warrant article proposes to refurbish Engine 3. Engine 3 is a 1985 Ford 9000 with a 1500 gpm pump that holds 1500 gallons of water and has a steel water tank which is leaking, body rust, and an aging pump. The tank will be replaced with a polyurethane tank which has a projected 20 year lifespan.*

**Article 21 - To raise and appropriate \$136,350 to hire four new fire fighters...**

*This warrant proposes to increase staffing of the Fire Department to 4 Firefighter/EMT's per shift with a minimum level of EMT-Intermediate as recommended by NFPA 1500: Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health (2 in 2 out). This will increase survivability for victims, decrease property loss, increase safety for fire-fighting personnel and increase operational effectiveness plus provide the ability to fully staff the second ambulance to cover emergency needs when the first ambulance is in on a call.*

**Article 22 -To raise and appropriate \$20,000 in matching grant money for Police, Fire and Emergency Management grants...**

*This warrant proposes to allocate \$20,000 that can be used by our Emergency Management Departments (Fire & Police) when applying for State or Federal Grants that require some percent of matching funds. Recent grant awards have allowed the Fire Department to obtain a Forestry Truck, electrical generator, Special Operations Trailer, and a SCBA compressor to refill oxygen tanks. Any unused money at the end of the year is returned to the general fund.*

**Article 23 - To raise and appropriate \$25,638 for one police cruiser...**

*This article authorizes the Town to purchase a 2006 Ford Crown Victoria police cruiser to include all necessary equipment to outfit the vehicle, lettering and costs associated with transferring the vehicles equipment. This cruiser is in addition to the two cruisers requested in the existing operating budget.*

**Article 24 - To raise and appropriate \$45,032 to hire and equip one new police officer...**

*This warrant article would authorize the Pelham Police Department to hire and equip one additional police officer, bringing the total number of full time police officers in the Town of Pelham to 20.*

**Article 25 - To raise and appropriate ~ \$251,136 for the Highway Department offset by the block grant...**

*This Grant is provided by the State of New Hampshire for road maintenance in Pelham. This article allows the town to spend the grant money for its designated purpose. There is no tax impact associated with this warrant*

**Article 26 - To raise and place \$35,000 in the Tallant Road and Willow Street bridge capital reserve fund...**

*This fund was established for replacement of two bridges identified by the State as deficient. The Tallant Road Bridge is scheduled for replacement in 2006 and this article continues contributing to the fund for the Willow Street Bridge Replacement. The State of New Hampshire will pay 80% of the total cost to replace both bridges.*

**Article 27 - To establish a Public Access Television capital reserve fund and place \$75,000 into that fund from franchise fees...**

*The Purpose of this warrant article is to update Technology used to provide Public Access Television to the Town of Pelham using revenues. In 2005 the Town received approximately \$134,137 in Franchise fees (revenues), PEG access expended \$54,000 leaving a difference of \$74,000 that was placed in the general fund. These franchise fees are paid by Cable subscribers not by all taxpayers and the intent is to utilize the difference for 5 years to achieve required upgrades.*



Article 28 - To raise and appropriate \$75,000 for a new Senior Center bus using \$40,000 from existing capital reserve fund...

*The Senior Center bus (22 seat capacity) provides transportation for Pelham's senior residents participating in Senior Center activities. The primary use is for transporting seniors to/from the Senior Center nutrition lunch program. It is unlikely that the bus will pass its 2006 inspection due to significant undercarriage rust and intermittent wiring and engine problems without further repairs. The current mileage is approximately 96,000. The estimated cost of a replacement bus is \$75,000 of which \$40,000 is already available in a capital reserve account.*

Article 29 - To raise and appropriate \$3,500 for a regional transit system...

*This warrant proposes to join the Greater Derry-Salem Regional Transit initiative ([HB568](#)). The Year 1 contribution is \$3,500 that will allow Pelham to participate in the pilot initiative to provide additional service to Pelham Senior Citizens, people with disabilities, and general public. There is no obligation to continue participation after Year 1 if the initiative is found to be under utilized. If the program is found to be beneficial, the Town has the option to continue at an increased contribution that would increase to approximately \$11,600 in Year 3.*

Article 30 - To raise and appropriate \$152,230 for a Cemetery building...

*The Cemetery Trustees are seeking funds to construct a building to house maintenance equipment, provide office space and replace the existing inadequate well. Currently, space is quite limited for record storage and Trustee meeting area. Bathroom facilities will be part of the building and will be accessible to the public during burial proceedings.*

Article 31 - To create and raise and appropriate \$2,500 for a cemetery lot repurchase reserve fund...

*People purchase cemetery lots and from time to time then change their minds regarding their final resting place. This fund would provide money for the town to repurchase lots for their original sales price. The lots would become town property again and be available for resale at the current market value.*

Article 32 - To raise and appropriate \$16,655 to upgrade the children's librarian from a part-time to full-time position...

*This warrant article would appropriate funds to establish health, dental and life insurance benefits for the Children's Librarian. Funding this benefits package would enable the Library to increase the Children's Librarian's hours to 30 or more hours per week.*

Article 33 - To raise and appropriate \$30,000 to clean up the Raymond Park tire dump...

*This warrant proposes to raise \$30,000 to pay for the cleanup of an illegal tire dump located at Raymond Park as mandated by the NH Department of Environmental Protection. Passage of this warrant article does not preclude the Town from seeking reimbursement in full from the responsible party at the completion of the NH DES investigation.*

Article 34 - To hear the auditors reports...

Article 35 - Petition Warrant: To elect the Planning Board... (See [www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant](http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant) for original petition.)

Article 36 - Petition Warrant: To establish a conservation area at the end of Stonepost Road... (See [www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant](http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant) for original petition.)

Article 37 - Petition Warrant: To list each warrant separately on the ballot... (See [www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant](http://www.pelhamweb.com/2006warrant) for original petition.)