

## GROTON SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, NOVEMBER 17, 2016

The Citizens of the Town of Groton, who are legal voters in Town Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Groton Community Building in Groton Village on Thursday, November 17, 2016, at 6:00 o'clock in the afternoon, to act on the following articles, to wit:

The Groton Town Meeting officially opened at 6:02 P.M. by Moderator Wayne Dyer. Moderator Wayne Dyer read the Warning for the Special Town Meeting. Moderator Wayne Dyer explained this would be broken into two parts. Second part will be To transact any other business that properly comes to the meeting.

Article 1: Shall the Town of Groton vote to set aside a 15 minute period, beginning 30 minutes and ending 15 minutes before Town Meeting is scheduled to begin as the sole designated period for interested individuals to gather to offer words of encouragement through prayer, poetry, or other personal expressions of gratitude?

This is the article as warned. Moderator Wayne Dyer stated he needed a motion.

Stan Pierce made the motion. Deborah Jurist seconded the motion.

The Moderator read the article again.

Article 1: Shall the Town of Groton vote to set aside a 15 minute period, beginning 30 minutes and ending 15 minutes before Town Meeting is scheduled to begin as the sole designated period for interested individuals to gather to offer words of encouragement through prayer, poetry, or other personal expressions of gratitude?

Mary Berlejung stated she felt that a non-denominational prayer would be best.

Deborah Jurist explained that it wasn't the intention that there not be prayer at Town Meeting just having a time set so that people not wanting to participate would know when it was so they could attend.

Lawrence Daniels spoke giving information from the House of Representatives "Journal of the House from Wednesday, March 20, 1991" Resolution relating to the 38<sup>th</sup> birthday of Rex "the Wonder Horse".

Barbara Johns Schwartz requested the Moderator read the warning again. The Moderator read the warning.

There was much discussion with pros and cons on wording concerning prayer.

Mark Wilson made the motion to amend the motion. Linda Nunn made this suggestion to read "Shall the Town of Groton vote to preserve its tradition of prefacing Town Meeting with an opportunity to offer words of encouragement through prayer, poetry or other personal expressions of gratitude". Motion seconded by Rodney Tinkham.

Moderator asked if there was any other discussion on the amendment.

There was much discussion concerning the amendment. The question is called to stop the debate.

The ayes have it to stop the debate.

A paper ballot was called for by seven people. Voting yes means we will go with the amendment and no vote would be that we return to the original wording of the warned article.

Total votes cast was 55, yes 34 and no 21. The yes has it. So we will go with the amended wording.

Deborah Jurist made the motion to amend the motion suggesting to read "Shall the Town of Groton vote to preserve its tradition of prefacing Town Meeting with an opportunity to offer

words of encouragement through prayer, poetry or other personal expressions of gratitude to end ten minutes after the start of town meeting”. Motion seconded by Mark Gleashia.  
The 2<sup>nd</sup> vote was a total of 52 votes cast, 19 yes and 33 no. The no has it. So that motion failed. Emily Pratt made the motion to amend the motion suggesting to read “Shall the Town of Groton vote to preserve its tradition of prefacing Town Meeting with an opportunity to offer words of encouragement through non-denominational prayer, poetry or other personal expressions of gratitude”. Motion seconded by Eric Volk. There was much discussion concerning the wording. Motion made to stop discussion. Motion seconded.  
The 3<sup>rd</sup> vote was a total of 50 votes cast, 26 yes and 24 no. The amendment passed. The main motion became “Shall the Town of Groton vote to preserve its tradition of prefacing Town Meeting with an opportunity to offer words of encouragement through non-denominational prayer, poetry or other personal expressions of gratitude”.  
The 4<sup>th</sup> vote was a total of 50 votes cast, 31 yes and 19 no. The motion passes.

To transact any other business that properly comes to the meeting.  
Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded.  
Adjourned at 8:07 P.M.

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Linda L. Nunn, Election Official

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Wayne Dyer, Moderator

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Wade Johnson Sr., Selectboard