

NEWS FEATURE

BROOKSVILLE

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Voters breeze through warrant at Brooksville town meeting

by Rich Hewitt

Voters tackled the 2016 warrant at town meeting Tuesday night, March 8, without much dissent and with only occasional discussion.

As usual, residents Edson Blodgett and Denis Blodgett kept things moving providing, respectively, the motion and second for each of the warrant articles.

The one non-budget item that attracted attention was the question of whether to establish a town fish committee. There will be no cost to the town in the formation of a fish committee, according to Selectman John Gray, at least, "not at this time."

That appeared to ease everyone's mind and they approved the idea without much discussion.

The idea comes from the efforts of a small group of people who want to improve the run of alewives in town by working with the two other towns along the Bagaduce River—Sedgwick and Penobscot.

"We'd like to move some alewives from Wight's Pond in Penobscot to Parker Pond in Brooksville and from Wight's Pond to Camp Stream in Sedgwick," said Paul Venno.

Penobscot has a fish committee, Venno said, and there are three or four people in town and one in Sedgwick who are interested in working on the project. He said they'd like to get to the point where there could be an alewife harvest again. Nobody's taken an alewife in town in 40 years, he said.

According to Gray, Venno already has spoken informally with members of the Penobscot committee. There was no other discussion, nor were there any details as to how and when the committees would proceed with the project.

Voters approved the \$1,105,047 municipal budget. That figure is \$3,500 lower than the one originally proposed due to a last-minute change in the cost of sending trash to the Blue Hill/Surry Transfer Station. The budget committee had recommended sending \$98,500 to Blue Hill for use of the disposal facility. At Tuesday's town meeting, the selectmen proposed a revised figure of \$95,000 reflecting new information from Blue Hill.

In response to a question, Gray said the town has not heard much yet about what Blue Hill will do in the future for trash disposal. Towns in the area have to decide between renewing the contract with the PERC plant in Orrington or switching to a new plan backed by the Municipal Review Committee which would send trash to a new, yet-to-be-built plant.

"It's just in the beginning stages," Gray said. "We should hear more this year about what's going to happen."

Most of the questions asked sought clarification of minor points in the warrant, but one resident raised concerns over the annual \$10,000 allocation for the salt shed reserve account.

"This has been on the warrant for a number of years," she said. "How much do you need to build the shed?"

Gray said that if the town had \$240,000 or so, "we'd be OK." There is currently a little more than \$53,000 in that account.

Gray said that several years ago, the state had pressured towns to build salt sheds and Brooksville had begun to raise funds for that purpose. But, when the state didn't allocate funds to cover its salt piles, he said, the townspeople voted to spend those funds—about \$40,000—to improve Betsy's Cove landing.



Brooksville residents raise their green voting cards during voting at the annual town meeting.

Photo by Rich Hewitt

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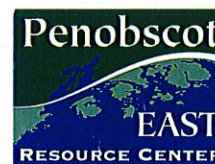
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