

***SPECIAL TOWN MEETING***

November 21, 2005

MODERATOR: Everett Poole

TOWN CLERK: Margaret T. Orlando

REGISTRARS: Carol Merry & Margaret T. Orlando

CONSTABLE: Daniel Bryant

TELLERS: William Meegan, Thomas Ruimerman & Richard Smith

The meeting was called to order a 7:45 p.m. Daniel Bryant, Constable read the return of the warrant. Of the 828 registered voters in the Town of Chilmark Two Hundred and twenty-three (223) were present.

Mr. Poole asked if there were any unregistered voters on the town meeting floor.

***ARTICLE 1.*** Read by moderator. Moved and seconded. The article was opened for discussion. Mr. Poole read a letter from John Keene offering to demolish and remove the building at no cost for the town. Mr. Parker said that interested parties had pledged \$250,000.00 to also help defray the cost to the town.

There was a lengthy debate. The over all sense of those in favor was that this chance to purchase the Home Port was an opportunity of a lifetime and if the town does not buy it now it would change the complexion of Menemsha forever and contribute to the eventual demise this fishing village. There was talk of considering alternate sources of funding. Doug Sederholm reported the position of the Finance Committee voted November 15, 2005 unanimously: "The Finance Committee recommends approval of the Warrant Article and strongly urges the Town to explore ways to lessen the financial burden on the taxpayers, including but not limited to use of Community Preservation Act open space funds, possible re-sale of a portion of the property and seeking state, federal and other grants." There was also discussion of a partnership with a non-profit organization to help pay for the purchase. Many in favor of the purchase of the Home Port spoke of the advantages the property offered for access to Menemsha creek, the parking, uses like a shellfish/fish hatchery and open space.

Voters opposed spoke of existing debt in Chilmark and that it was too expensive an investment for questionable value to the Town. They spoke of the needs of the Town that were not being addressed such as a Fire Station/Public safety building, affordable housing and the hope of strengthening the fishing industry in Menemsha. The strongest objection was to the overall increase in the taxes for property/homeowners in Chilmark.

Frank Yeomans stood to amend the Article by adding:

**It is the expressed intent of this Town Meeting that the Homeport building shall not be operated as a restaurant or other for-profit business and that no later than six months after acquisition a plan shall be developed for the property which shall be**

**submitted to the next subsequent Town Meeting for approval by a majority vote before implementation.** The amendment was moved and seconded. Mary Breslauer stood to amend the amendment to add at the end:

**including the financing of the property.** The amendment to the amendment was moved, seconded came to a vote and was carried.

Mrs. Doty stood to suggest that the wording "by 2/3 vote" be restored to the amendment. This amendment to the amendment was moved, seconded and came to a vote. Mr. Moderator said the chair was in doubt and called for a standing count.

The amendment to the amendment on the floor was carried:

In favor - 127

Opposed - 80

The original amendment, as amended, came to a vote and was carried.

Mr. Poole read the entire article as amended and reminded the meeting that a 2/3 vote was required. Article One came to vote. There was a standing count.

The Article was defeated:

In favor - 90

Opposed - 119

With no further business to come before the Town Meeting Mr. Poole pronounced it dissolved at 10:00 p.m.

A true copy. Attest:

Margaret T. Orlando,  
Town Clerk  
November 22, 2005