



TOWN OF GRAFTON
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TOWN MODERATOR

2008 Report of the Town Moderator

I would like to thank the voters of Grafton, who on May 5, 2008 elected me to a three-year term as Moderator. In this role, I am the presiding officer of the Town Meeting, open to all voters, upon which the legislative powers of the Town are exercised. This position entails regulating Town Meeting proceedings, deciding all questions of order, and making public declaration of all votes. I am also the appointing authority of our nine-member Finance Committee. Town Meeting may also determine whether the Moderator will be the appointing authority for other committees which may be called together from time to time. As of December 31, 2008, they included the six at-large members to the nine-member Secondary School Building Committee, some members of the Center Station Building Committee (fire station), and the three at-large members to the nine-member Town Administrator Screening Committee.

I made two first-time appointments to the Finance Committee: David Libbey (June 2008) and Lisa Rice (November 2008). At the May 12, 2008 Town Meeting, I re-appointed Dave Ross, Sue Robbins, and Heather McCue to the Finance Committee, for three-year terms ending June 30, 2011. In June 2008, I appointed Dr. Kenneth Grew, Ph.D. to the Secondary School Building Committee. In December 2008, I appointed Stephen Burke, Daniel Concaugh, and Susan Mills to the Town Administrator Screening Committee. Prior to interviewing the applicants to committees, I posted the vacancies on the Town Bulletin Board, Town web site, local cable access, and the Grafton News.

Grafton had Town Meetings on May 12, 2008 and October 20, 2008. The items acted on are detailed elsewhere in this Town Report. During both meetings, Police Chief Normand A. Crepeau and Fire Chief Michael Gauthier assured adequate resources for safety and order.

In accordance with Section 2-2 of Grafton's Town Charter, I appointed, and Town Meeting ratified Daniel Concaugh as my deputy moderator on both dates. Mr. Congaugh played an instrumental role in overseeing the overflow crowd in the high school gymnasium at our May 12, 2008 Town Meeting. You may recall the 900+ in total attendance, largely due to the Warrant Article on the School Feasibility Study. During that meeting, those in the gymnasium had both audio and video feed from the auditorium. Marcia Pereira, Grafton Public Schools Technology Coordinator, and Danielle DeLucia, Public Access Coordinator at GCTV provided significant technical expertise and assistance.

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The Moderator's role includes educating the public about Town Meeting and facilitating how that information is made available. In the Spring of 2008, prior to Town Meeting, I arranged for the Warrant Articles to be available in large print on our Town web site for those with low vision. Ann Morgan formatted this and got it on-line, and Michelle Drumm, Director of the Council on Aging provided input. I also arranged for sufficient large print copies to be available at the May and October meetings at the voter registration tables. Along these lines, Nancy Hazen, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen, and Cindy Ide, Secretary to the Town Administrator provided assistance.

In the Spring of 2008, my wife Lori and I donated four copies of "Town Meeting Time: A Handbook of Parliamentary Law" to the Grafton Public Library. This is our parliamentary guide in areas not covered by our Town Meeting By-Law. This guide may also be purchased from the Massachusetts Moderators Association, an order form which may be printed off of our Town web site, www.town.grafton.ma.us.

At each of the May and October, 2008 Town Meetings, I made available 500 copies of "A Citizen's Guide to Town Meetings", published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Francis Galvin. Just a dozen or so copies remained after the May Town Meeting. Far more remained following the less attended October meeting. George Cotton went out of his way to Ashburton Place in Boston to replenish my supplies.

Shortly before the October 2008 Town Meeting, I was a guest on "Two Guys Who Like to Talk", hosted by Rick Schultze and Bill Robidoux on GCTV-11. We reviewed all of the Warrant Articles which were to come before the Meeting. Later in October, I was their guest once more, discussing the Meeting which had just occurred. Rick and Bill have also spent countless hours over the years behind the cameras, bringing Town Meeting into your living room. In addition, the Town Meetings were played numerous times on GCTV in the weeks following each meeting.

The Fiscal 2009 budget for the Moderator (Account 114) was \$450.00. This first piece of this budget was the \$150.00 Moderator's salary/stipend. On October 7, 2008, I notified our Treasurer/Collector, Board of Selectmen, and Town Administrator that I was foregoing the stipend, retroactive to May 5, 2008, the day I was elected. The second piece was a Professional and Technical line item for \$300.00, which was appropriated for the microphone runners at Town Meeting. Although all of the runners provide a valuable service and are appreciated, I call attention to Grafton High student, Melissa Rynning who declined payment and chose to volunteer her time at our October 2008 Town Meeting.

I joined the Massachusetts Moderators Association shortly after being elected. It is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association that provides its members opportunities to communicate and meet in order to exchange ideas and information which can enhance the conduct of town meetings. I attended the Association's Annual Meeting on October 17, 2008 at Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston. The agenda included a New Moderators Workshop and a workshop

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on Civic Engagement and Town Meetings. I was also appointed to the Association's Legislative Committee which tracks proposed state legislation affecting town meetings or the role of the Moderator, with a view to recommending that the Association take a position on pending legislation in appropriate instances.

During 2008, our Town Clerk, Maureen Clark was quite helpful with input regarding Town Meeting. Our Town Accountant, Patricia Fay was also helpful in addressing questions in October 2008 regarding the financial aspect of various Warrant Articles. Finally, I had the opportunity to meet with our Town Attorneys, Anthony E. Penski and Ginny Sinkel Kremer from the law firm of Bowman & Penski to discuss legal and procedural matters pertaining to the Warrant Articles prepared for Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger R. Trahan, Jr.
Town Moderator